

RACE TO THE TOP

Tennessee Report

Year 4: School Year 2013–2014



U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

April 2015

Executive Summary

Race to the Top overview

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. ARRA provided \$4.35 billion for the Race to the Top fund, of which approximately \$4 billion was used to fund comprehensive statewide reform grants under the Race to the Top program.¹ In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) awarded Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants to 11 States and the District of Columbia. The Race to the Top program is a competitive four-year grant program designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and improving high school graduation rates; and ensuring students are prepared for success in college and careers. Since the Race to the Top Phase 1 and 2 competitions, the Department has made additional grants under the Race to the Top Phase 3, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge,² and Race to the Top – District³ competitions.

The Race to the Top program is built on the framework of comprehensive reform in four education reform areas:

- Adopting rigorous standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace;
- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices;
- Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and
- Turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Since education is a complex system, sustained and lasting instructional improvement in classrooms, schools, local educational agencies (LEAs), and States will not be achieved through piecemeal change. Race to the Top builds on the local contexts of States and LEAs participating in the State's Race to the Top plan (participating LEAs)⁴ in the design and implementation of the most effective and innovative approaches that meet the needs of their educators, students, and families.

¹ The remaining funds were awarded under the Race to the Top Assessment program. More information about the Race to the Top Assessment program is available at www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment.

² More information on the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/index.html>.

³ More information on Race to the Top – District can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-district/index.html>.

⁴ Participating local educational agencies (LEAs) are those LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's Memorandum of Understanding with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Race to the Top program review

As part of the Department's commitment to supporting States as they implement ambitious reform agendas, the Department established the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to administer, among others, the Race to the Top program. The goal of the ISU was to provide assistance to States as they implement unprecedented and comprehensive reforms to improve student outcomes. Consistent with this goal, the Department has developed a Race to the Top program review process that not only addresses the Department's responsibilities for fiscal and programmatic oversight, but is also designed to identify areas in which Race to the Top grantees need assistance and support to meet their goals. Specifically, the ISU worked with Race to the Top grantees to differentiate support based on individual State needs, and helped States work with each other and with experts to achieve and sustain educational reforms that improve student outcomes. In partnership with the ISU, the Reform Support Network (RSN) offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to Race to the Top grantees. The RSN's purpose is to support Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.⁵ At the end of Year 4, the Department created the Office of State Support to continue to provide support to States across programs as they implement comprehensive reforms. The Office of State Support will administer programs previously administered by the ISU.

Grantees are accountable for the implementation of their approved Race to the Top plans, and the information and data gathered throughout the program review process help to inform the Department's management and support of the Race to the Top grantees, as well as provide appropriate and timely updates to the public on their progress. In the event that adjustments are required to an approved plan, the grantee must submit a formal amendment request to the Department for consideration. States may submit for Department approval amendment requests to a plan and budget, provided such changes do not significantly affect the scope or objectives of the approved plans. In the event that the Department determines that a grantee is not meeting its goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the Department will take appropriate enforcement action(s), consistent with 34 CFR section 80.43 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).⁶

⁵ More information can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/index.html>.

⁶ More information about the Implementation and Support Unit's (ISU's) program review process, State Annual Performance Report (APR) data, and State Scopes of Work can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>.

Executive Summary

State-specific summary report

The Department uses the information gathered during the review process (e.g., through monthly calls, onsite reviews, and *Annual Performance Reports* (APRs)) to draft State-specific summary reports. The State-specific summary report serves as an assessment of a State's annual Race to the Top implementation. The Year 4 report for Phase 2 grantees highlights successes and accomplishments, identifies challenges, and provides lessons learned from implementation from approximately September 2013 through September 2014. Given that Delaware and Tennessee's initial four-year grant periods ended in June and July 2014, respectively, for Phase 1 grantees, the Year 4 report includes the beginning of the no-cost extension year (Year 5).

The State's education reform agenda

In January 2010, Tennessee passed the First to the Top Act (FTTT). Supported by the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), FTTT laid the foundation for broad-based education reform. Among other provisions, FTTT: (1) mandated a comprehensive evaluation system for teachers and principals based on multiple measures of effectiveness, including student achievement indicators and annual observations of educator practice; (2) removed the restriction on the use of value-added data for educator promotion, retention, tenure, and compensation decisions; (3) enabled State intervention in its lowest-achieving schools; and (4) authorized LEAs to adopt alternative salary schedules. In 2010, the State also aligned funding policies for a statewide plan for higher education through the Complete College Act of 2010.

Tennessee's \$500,741,220 Race to the Top grant provided additional support to advance the goals established by FTTT. Tennessee worked to narrow the academic achievement gap between student groups while raising overall student performance. In particular, Tennessee committed to building State capacity to support LEAs and drive student performance gains through Race to the Top's four education reform areas.

State Years 1 through 3 summary

Tennessee received its Race to the Top grant in July 2010 as part of the first round of the competition and worked during Years 1-3 to build capacity to carry out and continuously improve implementation of Race to the Top projects to meet FTTT goals and objectives. During Year 1, TDOE began to align its organizational structure with the priorities of the FTTT agenda and provide supports to LEAs. However, turnover in key leadership positions, including a change in the Governor and Commissioner of Education in the middle of the first year of the grant, led to refinement to TDOE's projects and their timelines. TDOE addressed the challenge of building its capacity to implement Race to the Top projects during Year 2. As it progressed with carrying out its reform agenda, the State revamped its approach to project management to measure progress and impact

of State initiatives, including competitive grants to LEAs. The State also held annual partnership meetings with LEAs focused on data and problem solving as it started transitioning its regional Field Service Centers (FSCs) from a primarily compliance-oriented role with LEAs to focus instead on collaborating to support local implementation of major reforms as Center of Regional Excellence (CORE) offices. In Year 3, CORE offices provided content-based specialists and regionally delivered training opportunities to support LEAs and school leaders in using data to improve instruction, transitioning to implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), refining implementation of the State's educator evaluation system, and addressing student achievement gaps in low-performing schools. The State also identified key practices to support CCSS implementation, educator evaluation, and student assignment that it believed could positively impact student outcomes, and offered an opportunity to LEAs to receive supplemental funds to support their Scopes of Work if they implemented these activities as participants in the "Scope of Work Supplemental Fund."⁷

During Years 1 through 3, the State engaged LEA leaders and educators to support the transition to CCSS. The State started implementation in Year 1 with kindergarten through second grade (K-2) English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Then, in Year 2, the State expanded training and support to grades three through eight (3-8) mathematics. In Year 3, the State continued implementing CCSS in K-2 and grades 3-8 mathematics and piloted ELA implementation in various grades and subjects in 60 of the State's 140 LEAs to prepare for full, statewide implementation across all grades and subjects in school year (SY) 2013-2014. The State's Common Core Leadership Council, established during Year 2, contributed to the design and implementation of the State's strategy for recruiting and selecting high-performing Tennessee educators to serve as Core Coaches to train and support their peers in the transition to CCSS. A total of 200 educators selected based on their record of classroom achievement received two weeks of intensive training from the State and experts in CCSS prior to training approximately 10,000 of their peers in Year 2. The State then scaled up the hands-on peer coaching model. More than 700 Core Coaches led the State's mathematics and ELA training in summer 2013, delivering direct support to 30,000 – more than 40 percent of all – Tennessee educators.⁸

The State also continually expanded CCSS professional development tools and curricular resources available for LEAs, school leaders, students, and stakeholders in institutions of higher education (IHEs), posting training and instructional materials through the website,

⁷ For more information on the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund activities, see <https://news.tn.gov/node/11181>.

⁸ Tennessee's approach to identifying educators to serve as Core Coaches to support the transition to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the perspectives of educators who participated in the training were features in two *PROGRESS* blog posts. These resources can be accessed at <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/progress/2013/12/tennessee-trains-more-than-30000-teachers-in-the-common-core-state-standards/> and <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/progress/2013/12/talking-with-tennessee-educators-about-the-common-core-state-standards-summer-trainings/>.

Executive Summary

TNCore.org. To concentrate on the role of instructional leaders in the transition to new standards and college- and career-ready assessments, during Year 3 the State designed and implemented a Leadership Course for more than 2,800 administrators across the State. Although TDOE made progress supporting the transition to CCSS, based on lessons learned from LEAs and educators implementing K-2 and ELA pilots and student achievement results in Years 2 and 3, the State identified a need to continue to build capacity in reading instruction across subject areas. As a result, Tennessee developed a plan to work with its CORE offices to support regional delivery of a year-long CCSS reading course in Year 4.

During the first three years of the grant period, Tennessee supported teachers and leaders to implement and refine a new evaluation system based on multiple measures of educator practice. After piloting its Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) educator evaluation system in Year 1, the State completed two years of full statewide implementation in SYs 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The State established mechanisms to gather data and feedback from the field on implementation, including through an online rapid-response system and an external evaluation by the Tennessee Consortium on Research and Evaluation and Development (TN CRED).⁹ Additionally, based on analysis of initial data, the State put in place TEAM coaches to support schools and districts with implementation. Informed by feedback from TEAM coaches, educators, and other stakeholders as well as analysis of implementation data, the State made adjustments from year to year to ensure continuous improvement and effective implementation. For example, the State refined the educator evaluation system to provide leaders with greater flexibility in scheduling observations and planned additional training to increase capacity to provide actionable recommendations for educators to improve their practice. Teacher survey data showed increased confidence among educators during Year 3, with perceptions around the evaluation system's usefulness in improving practice and student achievement increasing by 15 percent from the first year of implementation.¹⁰ The State also found that 90 percent of schools that received targeted support from State TEAM coaches improved fidelity of implementation in Year 3.

The State also made progress promoting transparency around IHE outcomes. In fall 2012 and 2013, the State publicly released teacher preparation program report cards for all teacher preparation programs in Tennessee that included information on program graduates based on their Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) ratings in SYs 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, respectively. The State worked with IHE faculty to improve data quality and to expand the elements included to support program analysis and improvement. For example, the Memphis Teacher Residency, a program that places teachers in

high-need schools for a year, identified gaps in its program based on the 2011 report, and made changes that contributed to its graduates' TVAAS growth in the 2013 report (see "Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals").

Through the Innovation Acceleration Fund (IAF), the State awarded multi-year grants to five LEAs to design alternative compensation systems that shift away from compensating educators for solely their years of experience and toward rewarding educators for raising student achievement. After initial implementation in SY 2011-2012 of the TEAM educator evaluation system and alternative salary schedules, four LEAs made payouts based on performance and analyzed results to continuously improve implementation in Year 3. The State also funded an additional LEA in SY 2012-2013 to plan the design of an alternative compensation model for its large, urban context. The State also began to gather and share lessons learned from the IAF grantees' planning, model development, and initial implementation to inform other LEAs in development of alternative compensation models.

The State made progress in Years 1-3 establishing the Achievement School District to support the lowest-performing schools in the State. In SY 2011-2012, the State co-managed five of the 13 schools initially identified for possible inclusion in the Achievement School District. While engaging in joint decision-making at these schools, the Achievement School District developed community relationships and capacity at the school, district, and system levels to build toward its goal of supporting the lowest five percent of the schools in the State. In SY 2012-2013, the Achievement School District began operating with six schools. In its first year as a district the Achievement School District saw modest achievement gains, outpacing the State's overall results in science by about 7 percent and nearly matching the statewide gains in mathematics proficiency. While the Achievement School District's reading results showed the need for continued support, as a result of overall student growth in the district, the Achievement School District earned a '5,' the highest rating possible, on TVAAS in SY 2012-2013.

The State also worked to close achievement gaps in additional schools in the State, particularly in the 167 schools identified as Focus schools based on significant achievement gaps in SY 2011-2012. Based on SY 2012-2013 results on Tennessee's State assessment (the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Test, or TCAP), Focus schools on average outperformed non-Focus schools in the percentage gain in proficiency of economically disadvantaged students in all subjects and of the State's aggregated Black, Hispanic, and Native American subgroups in all subjects except Algebra.

Tennessee also made some course corrections in Years 1-3. For example, after initial development of an Early Warning Data System (EWDS) and demonstrations with LEAs in Year 2, the State elected to delay statewide implementation of the EWDS to address technical issues and ensure quality data. The State ultimately determined it was necessary to revise the broader system architecture to launch an EWDS, now referred to as educator dashboards, that would add value to educators' day-to-day instruction and began working toward this

⁹ Tennessee's approach to engagement is featured in the *PROGRESS* blog post, *Engaging Educators to Design and Improve New Systems of Evaluation and Support*. Available at <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/progress/2014/08/engaging-educators-2/>.

¹⁰ "Educator Evaluation in Tennessee: Initial Findings." Tennessee Consortium on Research Evaluation and Development via "Classroom Chronicles." Available at: <http://www.tnconsortium.org/projects-publications/first-to-top-survey/first-to-the-top-survey-present-publications/index.aspx>.

Executive Summary

revised approach in Year 3. As another example, during Years 1-3, TDOE made progress developing the governance agreements and technical infrastructure needed to link its K-12 data with IHE data from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) and workforce data from the Tennessee Department of Labor to track outcomes for Tennesseans in pre-kindergarten through postsecondary (P-20) dashboards. The State initially planned to release a public P-20 website, but at the end of Year 3 decided instead to leverage the aggregate data compiled and share it through other channels, such as the State website devoted to the Governor's workforce readiness initiative, Drive to 55, and the State's LEA report cards. Course corrections and delays in both of these projects limited the information available to educators and the public through enhanced data systems in Years 1-3 but the State expects it will result in better final products in Year 4 and beyond.

The State also revised its approach to two projects related to professional development and resource offerings for teachers and principals. Initially, the State budgeted to expand an existing repository of online professional development resources. Over the first two years of the grant, the State determined that this was not the most strategic means of supporting educators' instructional practices and that the funding planned for Electronic Learning Center expansion could be better leveraged within the State's overall strategy for building educators' and LEAs' capacity to implement the CCSS. Additionally, the State refined its approach to supporting school leadership. Initially, the State planned to establish a Leadership Action Tank to study principal effectiveness and share best practices across the State. After additional planning, the State refined its theory of action and its approach now includes implementation of new leadership standards and tools and resources to empower districts to build networks of effective instructional leaders (see "Support for principals").

Finally, establishing the Tennessee science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) Innovation Network, and clarifying the mission and performance measures of each STEM Platform School and Regional STEM Innovation Hub in the Network was a challenge in Years 1-3. During Year 3, student achievement results in STEM Platform Schools varied and, overall, did not perform at the standard expected given the targeted investment. The State worked to analyze factors potentially contributing to results, refine mechanisms for how to measure the quality and impact of implementation of its Regional STEM Innovation Hubs, and identify examples of best practices and inform sustainability plans.

Student achievement results showed promising growth in student performance during Years 1-3. Results from 2010 to 2013 on TCAP and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed growth in overall student performance across grade levels for mathematics and ELA. For example, the percentage of fourth grade students at or above proficient in mathematics on NAEP increased by approximately 12 percentage points between SY 2010-2011 and SY 2012-2013.

State Year 4 summary

Accomplishments

Students showed gains on Tennessee's State assessment across grade levels in ELA and mathematics from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014. Tennessee implemented a variety of activities across its reform plan to achieve its goals related to increasing student achievement and maintained participation of all LEAs in the State in its Race to the Top plan.

In Year 4, each of the eight regional CORE offices continued to provide content-specific supports to LEAs and schools through regionally delivered training, including courses targeting literacy and leadership. CORE offices also devoted staff to identify and close achievement gaps in their regions and provided field-based support for schools and LEAs based on student achievement and educator evaluation results from SY 2012-2013. In Year 4, more than half the LEAs in the State participated, and gathered evidence of their implementation of practices to support CCSS implementation and educator evaluation as part of the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund.

The State continued to utilize multiple advisory councils, the TDOE Division of Data and Research Team, and TN CRED to engage stakeholders and gather feedback and data to assess and continuously improve implementation across efforts in its reform plan. Reports released by TN CRED in several project areas helped to inform ongoing refinement to implementation as well as plans for sustainability. The State also added new mechanisms to gather feedback and to share resources and insights on the impact of implementation on teachers and students at the classroom level, such as through the FTTT Oversight Team Teacher Ambassador and the Classroom Chronicles blog.

As it fully implemented CCSS in SY 2013-2014, the State continued providing training opportunities and resources for teachers and school leaders and expanded its delivery model to further build local capacity to support implementation. Approximately 8,800 Learning Leaders, representing schools from across the State, received training in summer 2014, and are expected to redeliver training to support CCSS implementation locally throughout SY 2014-2015. The State offered year-long CCSS reading and leadership courses to support literacy and instructional leadership and released additional resources on TNCORE.org, including more than 80 online learning modules to support effective teaching practices in ELA, mathematics, and other subject areas. The State also developed resources and provided regional trainings to teacher preparation program faculty to support integration of CCSS into pre-service teacher training.

The State continued implementation of TEAM in SY 2013-2014, including strategies to support continuous improvement and ongoing engagement with educators. The State provided resources and training to improve the quality of feedback teachers receive to make improvements to instruction as well as training opportunities

Executive Summary

to support LEAs and school leaders to use information available from TEAM to make other human capital decisions. For example, TDOE worked with 25 LEAs in the State to develop and refine alternative compensation plans for their unique local contexts. Ten LEAs statewide piloted a new principal evaluation rubric aligned to the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS) to enable the State to gather feedback and make refinements prior to statewide implementation in SY 2014-2015. The State also continued to support leadership development through implementation of TN LEAD grants, a jobs database, and a Teacher Leader Council that released a guidebook on approaches six LEAs in the State used to leverage teacher leaders in their districts.

In its second year operating with 17 schools, the Achievement School District saw mixed results at individual campuses, but positive progress in the district overall; outpacing the State average for proficiency gains in ELA and mathematics. In collaboration with the efforts underway to support Priority schools, the State estimates that nearly 4,500 fewer students attend Priority schools in Memphis now than in 2012. Additionally, 27 schools in Tennessee that were identified as Focus or Priority schools in 2012 based on student performance and achievement gaps have since been recognized in 2013 and/or 2014 as Reward Schools based on top performance in the State for overall proficiency and/or growth. The State also met its goals for establishing more than six STEM Platform Schools and associated Regional STEM Innovation Hubs.

Challenges

While the State fully implemented CCSS in all grades and subjects in SY 2013-2014, changes to the State's approach for transitioning to college- and career-ready assessments resulted in challenges communicating and clarifying expectations for LEAs and educators. Contracting and technical architecture development challenges further delayed the State's release of educator dashboards. However, the State adjusted its plan to extend work through SY 2014-2015 and utilized Year 4 to collaborate with LEAs and vendors to further refine the flow of data between local systems and the State platform to ensure that the data ultimately displayed is timely, accurate, and relevant for educators. Additionally, the State faced challenges meeting its targets for recruitment, retention, and placement in UTeach and Teach Tennessee and worked to gather and analyze data on these programs and other alternative preparation programs to continue to refine its approach to recruiting and training highly-effective teachers for high-need subject areas in the future.

Looking ahead

During the no-cost extension period in SY 2014-2015, Tennessee plans to build on its progress and continue to reflect on the impact of its Race to the Top projects to inform continuous improvements and sustainability of its reform efforts. While the State made significant progress in Years 1-4, this additional time will allow the State to fully realize its goals in several projects and refine or extend implementation in several others. Additionally, although Race to the Top funding will no longer directly support implementation of all initiatives, many reforms supported through Race to the Top in Years 1-4 will continue beyond the four-year grant period or inform future efforts.

During SY 2014-2015, the FTTT Oversight Team will continue to support projects in the State's plan with no-cost extensions as well as the 57 LEAs approved to continue their local Scopes of Work using Race to the Top funds through June 30, 2015. During Year 5, the State's external research partner, TN CRED, is expected to complete analyses of several key initiatives in the State's plan based on implementation progress, surveys of educators, and student outcomes. The State's CORE offices and their content specialists will also continue to partner with LEAs to build capacity to implement college- and career-ready standards for all students, make data-driven decisions, and improve educator effectiveness. Resources will also continue to be made available to IHEs to integrate content, such as CCSS and TVAAS, and learn about outcomes of program graduates through the teacher preparation program report card and school leader study.

Learning Leaders will continue to expand the reach of CCSS professional development through redelivery sessions offered in the fall and spring of SY 2014-2015 to support educators in implementation, reflection, and continuous improvement of CCSS instructional practices. The State expects to launch additional P-20 dashboards to the public and to roll out educator dashboards. As in prior years, the State will continue to refine its TEAM educator evaluation system, including implementing an updated principal evaluation rubric in SY 2014-2015. Tennessee will also continue to support its lowest-achieving schools, including through the Achievement School District, which will grow to serve an additional 2,000 students for a total of 6,500 students at 23 schools in SY 2014-2015. The State will collaborate with the new STEM Leadership Council and study personalized learning approaches implemented in classrooms across the State in Year 5 to develop the long-term vision for STEM in Tennessee.

State Success Factors

Race to the Top States are developing a comprehensive and coherent approach to education reform. This involves creating plans to build strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain the reforms initiated by the Race to the Top grant program.

Building State capacity to support LEAs

Through its Race to the Top grant, Tennessee continued to build on its efforts establishing an accountability system with clear, measurable goals and providing LEAs and educators with support to meet those goals.

In Year 4, the FTTT Oversight Team continued handling performance management of each Race to the Top project, including overseeing implementation of projects led by TDOE, managed by outside entities such as the THEC and TN CRED, and carried out by LEAs with the 50 percent of the grant allocated to them. In SY 2013-2014, the State added a Teacher Ambassador to the FTTT Oversight Team to expand TDOE's capacity to work directly with schools and teachers. To offer opportunities for the State to gain awareness of teachers' perspectives and assess whether State-provided supports and resources are useful in the field, the Teacher Ambassador held teacher roundtables in approximately 30 LEAs across the State in SY 2013-2014.

The TDOE Division of Data and Research established in Year 3 to enable rapid response data analysis based on progress of project-specific metrics and to evaluate key reform initiatives in the longer term continued in Year 4. For example, the TDOE Division of Data and Research examined statewide writing practices and the landscape of English learners in Tennessee to better inform the State's strategies in these areas, including developing and delivering new resources and training (see "Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments").

Tennessee's approach to performance management was profiled in three briefs as part of a series on performance management published by the RSN. The pieces feature Tennessee as an example of how a State set clear priorities and measurable outcomes, then directed and redirected resources, including time, money, technology, and people, toward those priorities. In addition, the series shares practices Tennessee implemented to ensure accountability for results, including utilizing data to make decisions to continue, improve, or end practices; tying incentives to performance; and engaging and communicating with internal and external stakeholders about successes and areas for continuous improvement.¹¹

Teacher ambassador gathers feedback, helps Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) develop and highlight resources to support educators

To expand on engagement efforts underway through project-specific advisory councils and online forums, the First to the Top Oversight Team added a Teacher Ambassador to its staff in school year (SY) 2013-2014. Throughout SY 2013-2014, the Teacher Ambassador met directly with teachers in the field through visits to approximately 30 Tennessee local educational agencies representing each of the eight regions of the State. During visits, roundtables with teachers included discussions about what contributes to their success, barriers they face, challenges and improvements they experienced as a result of educator evaluation system implementation, and suggestions teachers had to improve professional development.

Feedback the State gathered from roundtables highlighted how many educators were not utilizing resources in part due to lack of awareness or access. As a result, the TDOE Curriculum and Instruction Team enhanced navigation on TNCore.org and began highlighting resources as part of its weekly Common Core State Standards email newsletter. Additionally, TDOE developed additional tools and communications targeted to educators and spotlighting classroom practices. For example, one middle school team's approach to making use of Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System results to set targets with students was highlighted in a "voices from the classroom" blog post on tnclassroomchronicles.org.

More information and resources available at <http://www.tn.gov/education/data/TVAAS.shtml>, <http://tnclassroomchronicles.org/>, and <http://www.tncore.org/>.

Support and accountability for LEAs

The reorganization of FSCs into CORE offices focused on content-based support continued to be central to Tennessee's approach to overseeing and supporting local implementation of its reform plan. In Year 4, each of the 8 regional CORE offices continued to include a mathematics coordinator and data analyst, as well as academic consultants to focus on literacy and closing achievement gaps, respectively. CORE offices also deployed TEAM consultants and interventionists to provide support for schools and LEAs in need of course corrections based on educator evaluation and student achievement results from SY 2012-2013. Regional staff led professional development sessions for school leadership, provided training to LEA leadership on value-added data and how to use it to inform decisions, and assisted local teams to align learning targets to CCSS.

¹¹ These publications, *Performance Management: Establishing a Clear Destination*, *Describing a Clear Path*, *Performance Management: Achieving Results through Accountability*, *Performance Management: Putting Resources in the Right Places*, and *Performance Management: Achieving Results through Accountability* are available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/resources.html#capacity-building>.

State Success Factors

Regionally delivered reading course provides targeted support in literacy instructional practices

Based on implementation and student outcomes to date and feedback from the field, the State identified literacy as an area to target with additional support. To respond to the detected need and build on training delivered in summer 2013, the State designed reading courses for educators and partnered with Center of Regional Excellence (CORE) offices for regional delivery during SY 2013-2014. After collaborating with experts in reading instruction to develop courses that focus on foundational skills and strategies for reading across subject areas, the State trained 40 facilitators, including LEA and CORE office staff, who then began hosting regional courses by grade band (e.g., kindergarten through third grade) in fall 2013. The year-long courses include seven three-hour sessions and “bridge-to-practice” assignments between face-to-face sessions to connect course content with educators’ daily classroom instruction.

CORE offices established four priorities for SY 2013-2014 based on their potential to have an immediate impact on student outcomes. For literacy, CORE offices met their target of 5,000 enrollees in the reading course during this school year. The State surveyed participants, 4,500 of whom completed all course components, throughout course delivery to gather feedback, and used that information to norm and make adjustments to facilitation in courses that initially received lower feedback. On average, course participants surveyed, who represented more than 65 percent of the LEAs in the State, reported six on a seven-point scale that the training deepened their understanding of reading instruction and provided strategies for applying the course content to classroom practice.

In addition to literacy training sessions offered during summer 2014 training, during Year 5, the State plans to continue to provide reading courses for K-3 to expand the number of teachers in the State receiving this deepened support. The CORE team also plans to expand its tracking system to further analyze the data and effects of the CORE regional support structure.

Based on implementation of CORE offices in SY 2012-2013, at the beginning of SY 2013-2014 TDOE and CORE office staff jointly identified four shared goals to guide implementation (see *“Regionally delivered reading course provides targeted support in literacy instructional practices”* for more information). This process brought common focus around key measurable actions that could improve student outcomes while providing CORE offices with flexibility in which strategies to implement and how to engage LEAs, allowing for differentiation across regions based upon local need. For example, to target support for teachers whose students were not demonstrating growth in their academic achievement, Tennessee’s CORE offices committed to ensure 40 percent of “Level 1” teachers (*i.e.*, those identified as in need of improvement based on SY 2012-2013 results) received observations and feedback from evaluators prior to early fall 2013. The State reported that by November 2014, it exceeded this goal and 70 percent of Level 1 teachers had been observed and received feedback.

In Year 4, CORE staff coordinated with the FTTT team to support LEAs in refining their Scopes of Work, including submitting no-cost extension requests to be reviewed by the State on a case-by-case basis.¹² Involving CORE offices in this process enabled the State to provide LEAs with feedback and guidance on how to integrate their Race to the Top Scopes of Work with other local strategic plans and funding streams to ensure focus and alignment on each LEA’s specific needs and goals.

Seventy-seven of the State’s 140 LEAs elected to implement one activity each for teacher evaluation and CCSS in SY 2013-2014 based on local memoranda of understanding (MOUs) submitted to TDOE in summer 2013 to participate in the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund. Informed by research and implementation to date, the State developed a specific set of reform activities related to implementation of teacher evaluation, CCSS, and student assignment that it believed could have timely impact on student outcomes. The State began collecting anecdotal feedback and other evidence (*e.g.*, rosters for participation in CCSS Leadership Course, submission of co-observation ratings) to assess impact and potential implications for scaling these activities to other LEAs in the State. For student assignment, LEAs planned in SY 2013-2014 to implement activities such as assigning highly-effective teachers to more students in SY 2014-2015.

LEA participation

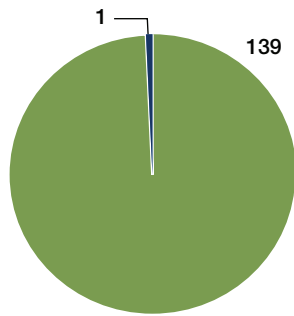
In Year 4, Tennessee reported that 139 of its 140 LEAs participated in Race to the Top.¹³ As part of its Race to the Top grant, Tennessee created the Achievement School District, which was fully established in SY 2012-2013. The Achievement School District did not exist as an LEA at the time Tennessee began its grant and is, therefore, not considered a participating LEA, although its schools, teachers, principals, and students are included in the State’s reported data.

¹² More information on the State’s process for considering its LEAs’ requests for no-cost extensions is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/tennessee-14.pdf>.

¹³ This number includes 135 LEAs, and 4 State special schools: Alvin C. York, Tennessee School for the Deaf, Tennessee School for the Blind, and West Tennessee School for the Deaf. On July 1, 2013, Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools became a single school district, which remains a participating LEA.

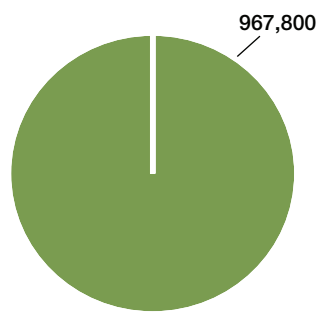
State Success Factors

LEAs participating in Tennessee's Race to the Top plan



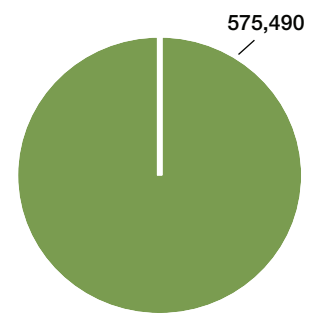
■ Participating LEAs (#)
■ Other LEAs (#)

K-12 students in LEAs participating in Tennessee's Race to the Top plan



■ K-12 students (#) in participating LEAs
■ K-12 students (#) in other LEAs

Students in poverty in LEAs participating in Tennessee's Race to the Top plan



■ Students in poverty (#) in participating LEAs
■ Students in poverty (#) in other LEAs

The number of K-12 students and number of students in poverty statewide are calculated using pre-release data from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD). Students in poverty statewide comes from the CCD measure of the number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch subsidy (commonly used as a proxy for the number of students who are economically disadvantaged in a school) under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program. The students in poverty statewide and number of K-12 students statewide counts are aggregations of school-level counts summed to State-level counts. Statistical procedures were applied systematically by CCD to these data to prevent potential disclosure of information about individual students as well as for data quality assurance; consequently State-level counts may differ from those originally reported by the State. Please note that these data are considered to be preliminary as of September 8, 2014.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

Stakeholder engagement

The State continued to use multiple mechanisms in Year 4 to engage educators and other stakeholders to assess implementation at the local level and to provide timely feedback to inform adjustments or additions to training opportunities and resources. District leaders and educators continued to provide initiative-specific implementation guidance through surveys and participation in groups, including the Common Core Leadership Council, Teacher Leader Council, Achievement Advisory Council, and the STEM Leadership Council. The State also utilized online communications through emails, websites and blogs, such as weekly Directors' updates, newsletters from TEAM and TNCore regarding the educator evaluation system and CCSS implementation, and features on Tennessee Classroom Chronicles to share resources and insights on the impact of implementation on teachers and students in classrooms across the State.

As part of its plan, TDOE contracted with TN CRED to evaluate and examine Tennessee's reform initiatives. In spring 2014,

TN CRED administered the fourth First to the Top survey to a sample of teachers and building level administrators statewide with a 42 percent response rate. As in Years 1-3, the survey focused primarily on gathering educators' perceptions of implementation of the State's teacher and principal evaluation system and CCSS. TN CRED also continued focus groups with educators to assess quality and trends in implementation to inform the State of LEAs' progress and to identify areas in need of adjustment.

In Year 4, TN CRED also completed reports based on analyses of other aspects of the State's reform plan. For example, TN CRED released findings from studying the State's efforts to ensure equitable access to effective teachers by providing retention bonuses to Level 5 (*i.e.*, highly-effective) teachers in Priority schools (see "Supporting low-performing schools"). TN CRED also completed analysis of the State's approaches to boost the quality of STEM instruction through professional development and regional capacity building through STEM Hubs (see "State's STEM initiatives").¹⁴

¹⁴ These reports are available at http://www.tnconsortium.org/data/files/gallery/ContentGallery/Effective_Teacher_Retention_Bonuses_Evidence_from_TN.pdf and http://www.state.tn.us/thec/Divisions/AcademicAffairs/aa_main.html.

State Success Factors

TN CRED also made progress studying Tennessee's school leader labor market based on the School Leader Licensure Assessment (SLLA) preparation programs' passage rates, and the relationship of the assessment to evaluation scores. The Achievement School District is also included in TN CRED's scope. While data collection to document the start-up and early implementation of the Achievement School District, including data on student mobility and charter management strategies, was underway in Year 4, efforts on this analysis, including integrating student outcomes data available to date, will continue in SY 2014-2015.

Successes and challenges

The State reported progress in the number of students on grade level as compared to the beginning of the grant period:

- Nearly 50 percent of Algebra II students are on grade level, up from 31 percent in 2011. More than 13,000 additional Tennessee students were on grade level in Algebra II than when Tennessee first administered the test in 2011;
- Approximately 100,000 additional Tennessee students were on grade level in mathematics compared to 2010; and
- More than 57,000 additional Tennessee students were on grade level in science compared to 2010.¹⁵

In Year 4, the State built upon the foundation of CORE offices, expanding the content-specific staff available to support LEAs, and identifying key areas to focus supports across the State throughout the school year while enabling differentiated strategies to meet goals in those areas based on local needs. The State utilized CORE office staff and the Teacher Ambassador's engagement with educators, as well as input from advisory councils and other communication channels, to continuously gather feedback and assess progress in the field. Further expanding its strategies for gathering insights from educators, at the end of Year 4, the State launched a Teacher Advisory Council that will continue to gather input and ideas from educators to refine implementation and supports during SY 2014-2015.

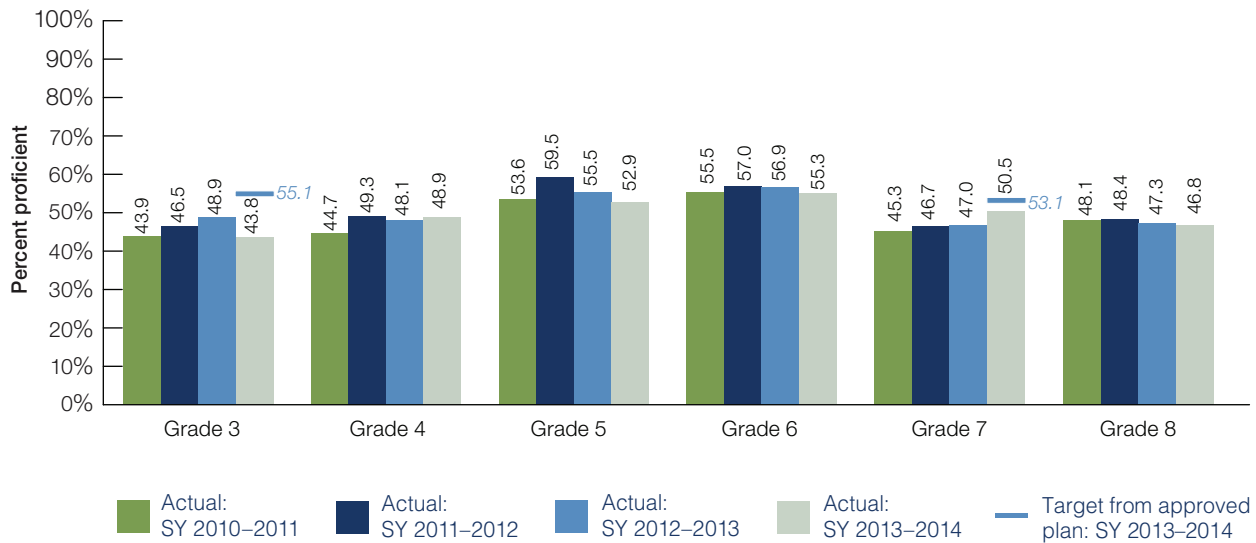
The State continued efforts to study the impact of its Race to the Top investments and plan for sustainability through the FTTT Oversight Team's performance management routines for State-led projects, evidence submitted by LEAs participating in unique projects such as the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund, targeted analysis efforts by the TDOE Division of Data and Research, and longitudinal studies of multiple aspects of its reform plan through its partnership with TN CRED. While TN CRED will continue analysis in Year 5, efforts to consider strategies for long-term continuation of the external research partnership also got underway in Year 4.

¹⁵ More information is available at http://www.tn.gov/education/data/tcap_2014.shtml.

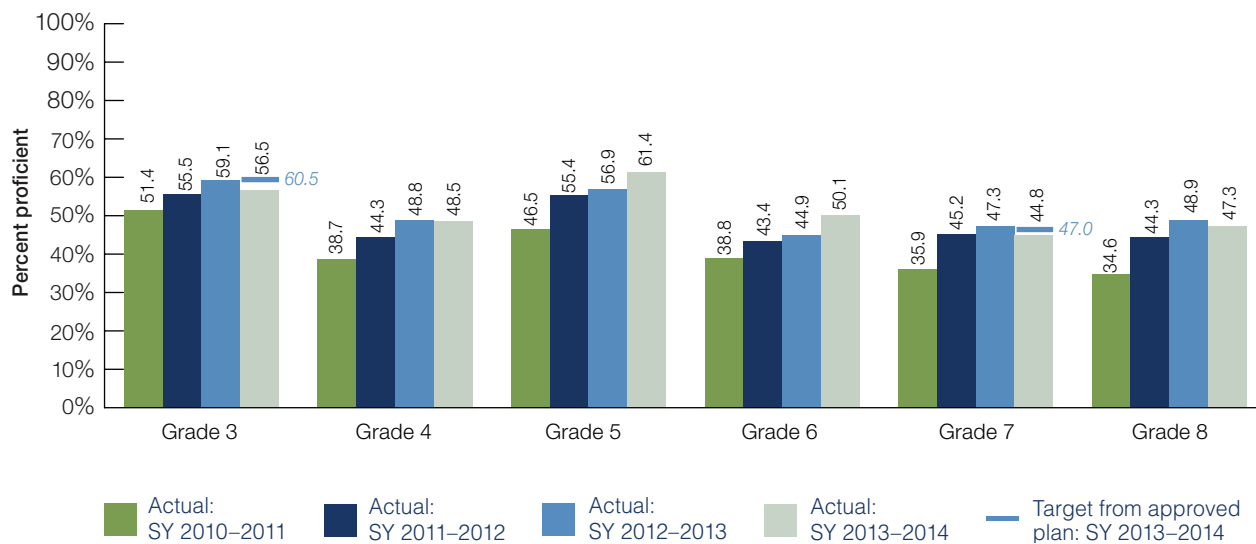
State Success Factors

Student outcomes data

Student proficiency on Tennessee's ELA assessment



Student proficiency on Tennessee's mathematics assessment



Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: November 10, 2014.

NOTE: Over the last four years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

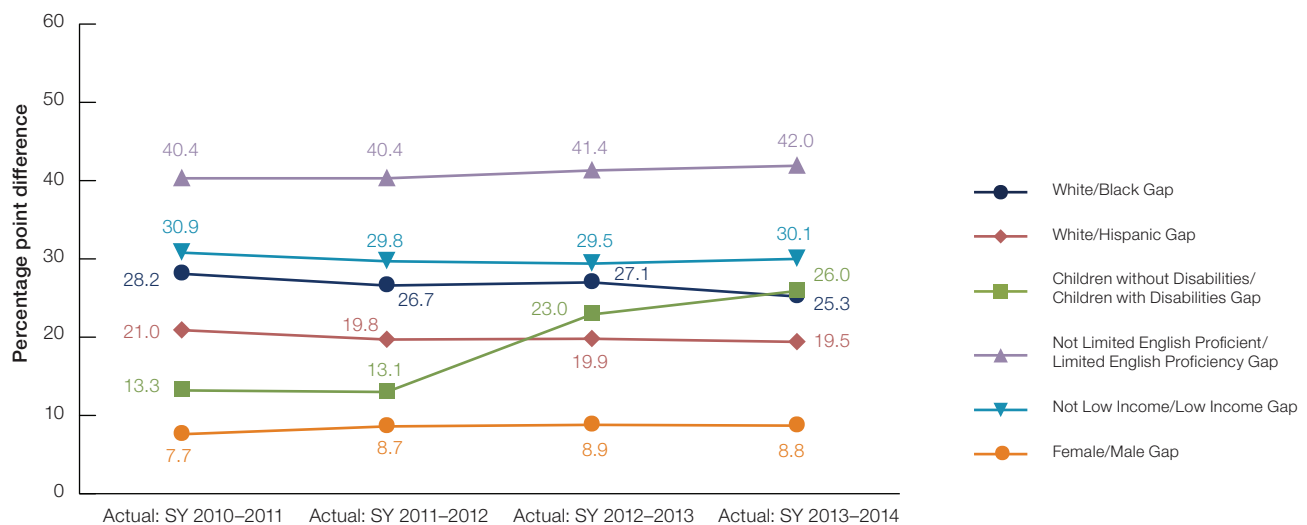
For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

State Success Factors

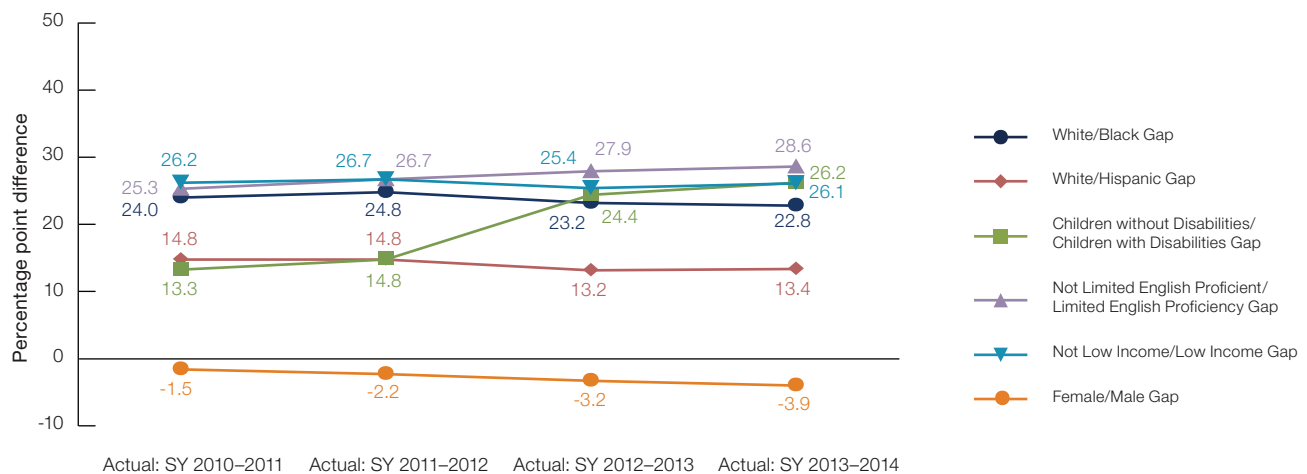
Students generally showed annual gains on Tennessee's State assessment across grade levels in mathematics from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014. Results from Tennessee's ELA assessment during the same time period were mixed.

Since SY 2010-2011, Tennessee saw mixed results for closing the achievement gap between student sub-groups on ELA and mathematics assessments.

Achievement gap on Tennessee's ELA assessment



Achievement gap on Tennessee's mathematics assessment



Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: November 10, 2014.

Numbers in the graph represent the gap over four school years between two sub-groups on the State's ELA and mathematics assessments.

Achievement gaps were calculated by subtracting the percent of students scoring proficient in the lower-performing sub-group from the percent of students scoring proficient in the higher-performing sub-group to get the percentage point difference between the proficiency of the two sub-groups.

If the achievement gap narrowed between two sub-groups, the line will slope downward. If the achievement gap increased between two sub-groups, the line will slope upward.

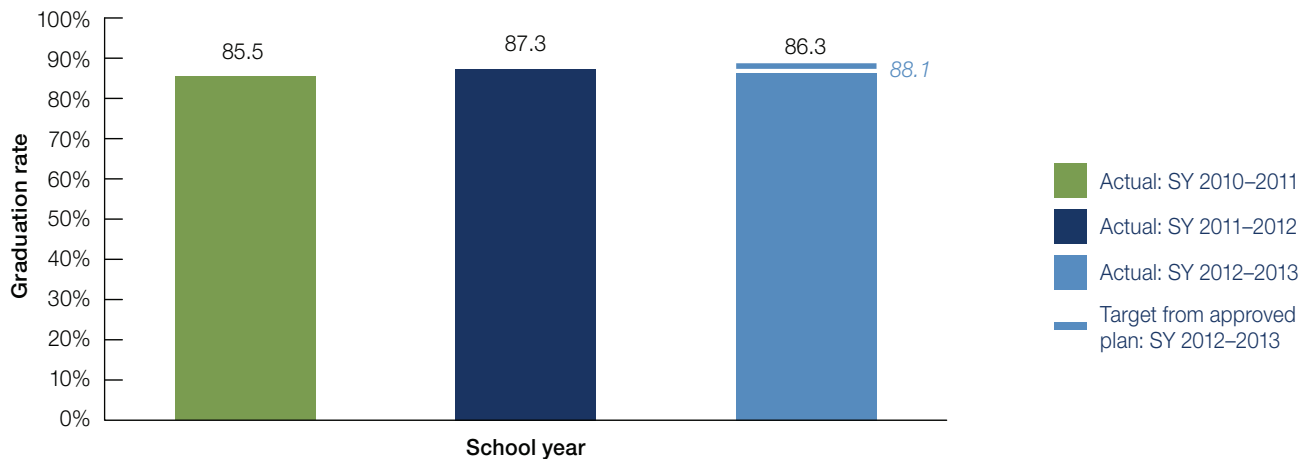
NOTE: Over the last four years, a number of States adopted new assessments and/or cut scores.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

State Success Factors

Tennessee's high school graduation rates increased slightly overall from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2012-2013, though rates declined slightly between SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013. Graduation rates for most student sub-groups stayed approximately the same or decreased slightly while rates for Hispanic or Latino and limited English proficient students increased slightly each year since SY 2010-2011. Tennessee's college enrollment rates increased from SY 2010-2011 to SY 2013-2014, though the rates dropped slightly in SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013 before increasing in SY 2013-2014.

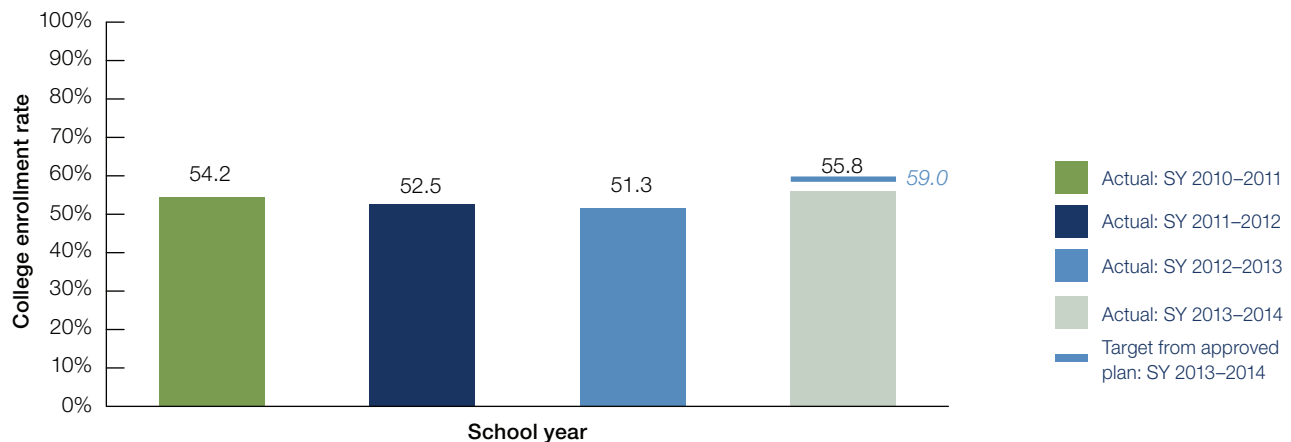
High school graduation rate



Preliminary SY 2012-2013 data reported as of: September 15, 2014.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

College enrollment rate



Preliminary SY 2013-2014 data reported as of: October 14, 2014.

For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

The Department provided guidance to States regarding the reporting period for college enrollment. For SY 2013-2014 data, States report on the students who graduated from high school in SY 2011-2012 and enrolled in an institution of higher education (IHE).

Standards and Assessments

Implementing rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career is an integral aspect of education reform in all Race to the Top States.

Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments

In Year 4, Tennessee fully implemented CCSS in ELA and mathematics in all grades and subjects. The State continued to partner with approximately a dozen district leaders across the State serving on the Common Core Leadership Council to guide its engagement and support strategy, including designing a long-term CCSS statewide training model.

In SY 2013-2014, to further support all students in the transition to college- and career-ready standards and educators to differentiate instruction to meet varied student needs, Tennessee began statewide implementation of Response to Intervention and Instruction.¹⁶ In addition to CORE office support, the State expanded content and resources available on TNCore.org to support Response to Intervention and Instruction, including criteria to support educators' selection of appropriate resources for students and tools to help educators identify students' phonological and phonics awareness and address identified gaps. The website also added to information and instructional tools available for multiple audiences, including educators, parents, policymakers, and other interested community members. For example, the website grew its collection of practice assessment items and curricular resources, including unit and task arcs and close reading tasks to assist in the transition to college- and career-ready standards and assessments. In Year 4, the State also continued to engage stakeholders through biweekly email updates to educators highlighting CCSS training and support opportunities and resources and to share examples from classrooms implementing CCSS across the State through its Classroom Chronicles blog.

To provide support to principals in their roles as instructional leaders, in Year 4, the State conducted a second offering of the Common Core Leadership Course developed and delivered initially in SY 2012-2013. Based upon positive feedback from leaders who participated in the first course and reported that the experience helped them understand expectations and implement reforms in their schools, the State developed a second course, Leadership 202, attended by 2,200 leaders – more than two-thirds of the State's school leaders. Similar to the State's Core Coach training structure, the State continued to recruit and train current Tennessee school and LEA leaders with a record of increasing student achievement to deliver the Leadership Courses to their peers. Each semester-long course includes three face-to-face sessions as well as homework that requires leaders to connect theory with day-to-day practice by collecting and analyzing evidence of CCSS implementation among educators and students in their schools between sessions.

Based on lessons learned from the Common Core Leadership courses and train-the-trainer Core Coach model implemented in Years 2 and 3, the State introduced the School Team Training Series in summer 2014 to continue to support LEAs and educators with CCSS implementation. While early research showed positive impacts of the Core Coach model on instruction, as the State and the Common Core Leadership Council considered sustainability and ongoing local capacity building, they identified two areas that needed additional attention in the statewide training approach: supporting redelivery and structuring ongoing support. Similar to 2012 and 2013 when the State recruited and trained effective teachers to serve as Core Coaches to deliver training to their peers during the summer, in 2014, the State utilized Core Coaches to deliver training to educators representing nearly every school in the State. The educators who attended training in summer 2014, known as Learning Leaders, received both content and facilitation training similar to the preparation Core Coaches receive on how to turn around and deliver the same training to their peers. The State is planning to collect data to learn how the 8,800 Learning Leaders redelivered the summer 2014 training, which was offered in three grade and subject bands (pre-kindergarten-2 ELA and mathematics, 3-12 literacy, and 3-12 mathematics), locally before the start of SY 2014-2015. To meet the State's second identified goal of offering more ongoing and sustained support, Learning Leaders will reconvene in fall 2014 and spring 2015 to receive additional content and facilitation training to support their capacity to lead a total of six sessions locally throughout SY 2014-2015. Similar to the model the State used in its leadership and reading courses, the sessions include modeling of research-based practices, trying out strategies in classrooms, and debriefing after implementing a common practice. The State plans to utilize surveys throughout SY 2014-2015 to assess the progress and quality of School Team Training Series implementation, including information on how LEAs are structuring local redelivery and feedback from training redelivered by Learning Leaders.

To increase transparency around CCSS instructional shifts to enable educators to assess their and their students' readiness for the transition to new standards and college- and career-ready assessments and help the State assess overall progress, the State continued to offer optional assessments known as Constructed Response Assessments (CRAs) introduced in SY 2012-2013. In addition to providing LEAs and school leaders with CRA results at the LEA, school, and individual level, in Year 4 the State released memos summarizing statewide results and instructional implications and developed webinars to support local interpretation of results. In addition to offering CRAs, based on feedback and analysis of implementation in Year 3, the State expanded its writing assessment to provide additional opportunities for students to practice literacy tasks aligned to CCSS expectations and for teachers to more deeply engage with the depth and content of

¹⁶ Note that the State's Response to Intervention and Instruction implementation is not funded through Race to the Top.

Standards and Assessments

the new standards and to build awareness of where students may have skills or gaps. In addition to requiring grades five, eight, and eleven to offer additional practice with college- and career-ready assessment structures, the State made writing assessments available online for all grades 3-11 for optional local administration.¹⁷

Tennessee was a member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium beginning in 2010. In April 2014, the Tennessee legislature voted to leave PARCC, continue its current State assessment, TCAP, for SY 2014-2015, and release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an assessment to be delivered in SY 2015-2016.¹⁸

To boost prospective teachers' readiness to implement CCSS upon entering the classroom, Tennessee contracted with the Ayers Institute, a Tennessee-based philanthropy group working in conjunction with Lipscomb University, to develop CCSS training and resources for teacher training programs throughout the State. In Year 4, the State developed and released seven additional videos highlighting CCSS instructional practices in grade one reading, grade three social studies, Algebra I, and chemistry, as well as professional learning community routines of planning and reflection.¹⁹ The videos are accompanied by facilitator guides that include additional resources and activities for teacher preparation program faculty to use with pre-service candidates to train them to enter the field with the pedagogy and teaching practices needed to immediately implement CCSS. To highlight these resources and provide an opportunity for faculty to discuss campus-specific implementation issues, TDOE partnered with the THEC to hold five two-day workshops for faculty from colleges of education and arts and sciences, as well as faculty from alternative preparation programs in Year 4. The State plans to develop additional modules (e.g., K-3 and high school instruction, TEAM implementation, school leadership) in SY 2014-2015 to continue to support program faculty to implement revisions to pre-service program syllabi and curriculum.

Successes and challenges

Utilizing feedback and lessons learned during implementation to date, the State continued to support LEAs, school leaders, teachers, and students in the transition to CCSS through face-to-face training, ongoing engagement, and a variety of training tools and resources available online. The State developed a second phase of the Leadership Course initially delivered in SY 2012-2013, enabling continued support to more than 2,500 leaders in the State. Additionally, based on implementation of training such as the Leadership Course and input from the Common Core Leadership Council, the State introduced a new training model in summer 2014 to expand the depth of local capacity to support CCSS implementation. During winter 2014 and spring 2015, Learning Leaders will receive additional content and delivery training to support local capacity to deliver ongoing professional development throughout the school year. To ensure this model contributes to improvements in educational outcomes, the State plans to use data and feedback to monitor progress and quality of School Team Training Series implementation.

While the State fully implemented CCSS in all grades and subjects in SY 2013-2014, changes to the State's approach for transitioning to college- and career-ready assessments resulted in challenges communicating and clarifying expectations for LEAs and educators. According to TN CRED's 2014 FTTT survey, satisfaction with CCSS declined among Tennessee educators between 2013 and 2014.²⁰

As TDOE analyzes TCAP spring 2014 and 2015 results and transitions to implementing a new State assessment in SY 2015-2016, the State will need to continue to set goals and utilize data to identify where instructional shifts are taking hold in LEAs and classrooms and where additional support from Learning Leaders, CORE offices, online modules, or other training and resources is needed for students or educators.

¹⁷ LEAs that opted to participate in the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund selected one of three CCSS transition activities: implementation of Constructed Response Assessments (CRA), implementation of the writing assessment online for all grades 3-11, or enrollment of all leaders in the CCSS Leadership Course.

¹⁸ Following the Request for Proposals (RFP) process, in November 2014, the State signed a contract to develop new assessments aligned to CCSS Tennessee adopted in 2010 for use in SY 2015-2016. See <http://tennessee.gov/education/assessment/TNReady.shtml> for more information.

¹⁹ Resources are available at <http://www.lipscomb.edu/ayers/invest>.

²⁰ Available at http://www.tnconsortium.org/data/files/gallery/ContentGallery/Ballou_Common_Core_Brief_92014.pdf.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) and instructional improvement systems (IIS) enhance the ability of States to effectively manage, use, and analyze education data to support instruction. Race to the Top States are working to ensure that their data systems are accessible to key stakeholders and that the data support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement.

Fully implementing an SLDS

The State's plan includes enhancements to the accessibility and display of data currently contained in the P-12 system through educator dashboards and by connecting P-12 data from TDOE with higher education and workforce data to provide a comprehensive P-20 data system.

In Year 4, the State continued to refine the system architecture necessary to display educator dashboards including data on attendance, behavior, course completion, and other indicators in a Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) compliant way. The State also continued engagement with three pilot LEAs and held additional demonstrations to share the tool in development and gather feedback. Based on this outreach, the State honed requirements to improve data flow between local data systems and the State's platform and enhanced user navigation.

To support the more than 100 LEAs in the State making decisions about new student information system vendors for SY 2014-2015, in SY 2013-2014 the State collaborated with LEAs and vendors to consider technical system specifications that will enable stronger integration to the enhanced State data system once it is fully developed. After issuing a Request for Qualifications in Year 3, the State identified five preferred student information system vendors based on the alignment of their products to the State's interoperability requirements (*e.g.*, data relationships, common data language) and in SY 2013-2014 began to test how student information system vendors' interfaces will connect LEA data to teacher dashboards to refine them prior to loading local data. Given prior development setbacks and the timing of student information system transitions during summer and fall 2014, the State plans to continue implementation of this activity and provide training opportunities for LEAs and educators in Year 5.

The University of Tennessee, Center for Business and Economic Research is providing coordination among State agencies to extend the P-12 system to incorporate data from THEC and the Tennessee Department of Labor into a P-20 system known as Measure TN. In Year 4, the State finalized data integration across agencies and made additional refinements to the dashboards that display individual agency data and data from multiple agencies that are now in the P-20 data warehouse. During Year 4, staff from the agencies included in the data sharing agreement, such as the TDOE Division of Data and Research, began utilizing the P-20 data to conduct internal

analyses. For example, the State was able to review student graduation, postsecondary, and workforce data as it prepared to launch the Tennessee Promise Initiative, which provides two years of tuition support for community and technical colleges for Tennessee graduates. Instead of releasing a public Measure TN website, the State continued to share data from the system through additional dashboards on the Drive to 55 website (*e.g.*, educational attainment by county) and expanded statistics on the 2014 TDOE Report Cards. In Year 4, the State also worked to develop a research access portal and a process for agencies to review requests from researchers for P-20 data consistent with FERPA guidelines.

Using data to improve instruction

To build LEA and educator capacity to access, analyze, and apply data to improve instruction, TDOE continued partnerships with Battelle for Kids and the SAS Institute in Year 4. The State continued to embed Battelle for Kids staff as data analysts and mathematics coordinators in CORE offices available to offer support to LEAs in CCSS implementation and using data to drive local decision-making. During SY 2013-2014, mathematics coordinators and data analysts led professional development sessions for LEA and school leadership, on topics including value-added data and how to use it to inform decisions and aligning learning targets to CCSS.

The State also made additional online courses and resources available to educators on formative instruction, value-added data, and using value-added and other data to redesign LEA compensation systems (see "Alternative compensation"). During Year 4, the State continued to improve access to information by partnering with the SAS Institute to refine the visualization of reports for teachers. The enhanced reporting functionality enabled teachers to download and export system, school, and teacher value-added information faster than in the past. The State also partnered with the SAS Institute to provide additional training to TDOE and CORE office staff to build capacity internally around value-added data. In addition to existing resources and training opportunities, the State identified a need to develop educator-friendly resources describing how they could use TVAAS data to improve their classroom instruction. To develop these resources, the State's Teacher Ambassador collaborated with the TDOE Division of Data and Research and the SAS Institute to develop factual one-pagers and collect stories from educators on how they use TVAAS, and posted these resources on the TDOE website.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

In Year 4, the State also continued collaboration with the SAS Institute to develop eight hours of online modules to support pre-service institutions to integrate TVAAS into teacher preparation programs to ensure new teachers are familiar with the State's value-added model and can use it to inform instructional decisions. As of January 2014, 250 professors and 1,000 student accounts existed across the 42 IHE preparation programs in the State, consistent with the State's initial target to reach 250 IHE faculty members. In December 2013, the State also launched a secure web portal to provide TVAAS data to the 42 IHEs in the State for their program completers. Institutions have started to incorporate the modules into their instruction in different ways. For example, one university designed a full course on TVAAS, while another built in a unit on TVAAS as part of an assessment class, and some universities used the modules as a self-guided component of their curriculum.

Successes and challenges

Based on feedback from LEAs, Battelle for Kids staff embedded as mathematics coordinators and data analysts within CORE offices continued to be an efficient and beneficial way to support local capacity building in these content areas.

While the State encountered challenges with technical architecture, the timing of more than half the LEAs in the State selecting new student information system vendors also presented an opportunity to promote greater interoperability with the flow of data between local systems and the State platform. The State plans to continue working on the State data system architecture as well as launching

and providing resources to support use of educator dashboards in Year 5. Engagement with pilot LEAs utilizing educator dashboards in SY 2013-2014 indicated that added focus on the use of data revealed a need for additional data cleaning and updates to ensure data quality.

Continued enhancements to the State's P-20 system, Measure TN, made data on high school completion and workforce trends more accessible and transparent to inform the State, LEAs, and the public. For example, at the State's annual conference for LEAs in fall 2014, the State utilized Measure TN to provide LEAs with individualized analyses of their students' postsecondary outcomes. Based on the local results, the State supported LEA staff to identify and analyze challenges and determine next steps. The integration of Measure TN with the Drive to 55 campaign evidences the State's continued commitment to transparency. Additional time is needed to assess how the dashboards made available through the State's website engage policymakers, educators, parents, preparation programs, and businesses, and whether the tools strengthen partnerships around improving student achievement.

The State provided expanded resources to educator preparation programs in Year 4 to enable them to integrate new material into their programs so that new graduates are better prepared to teach and to determine how their graduates perform once they are in the classroom to inform future program improvements. While feedback on these tools and information has been positive, future decisions on program approval policies will be important to more formally integrate understanding of TVAAS and other data-driven instructional practices into pre-service course content expectations.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Race to the Top States are developing comprehensive systems of educator effectiveness by supporting high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, ensuring equitable access to effective teachers and principals, improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs, and providing effective supports to all educators. As part of these efforts, Race to the Top States are designing and implementing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals; conducting annual evaluations that include timely and constructive feedback; and using evaluation information to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, retention, and tenure decisions.

Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals

During Year 4, Tennessee continued efforts to build its workforce of high-quality educators and address targeted needs for specific subject areas through increasing participation in and providing support for several programs.

In SY 2013-2014, the State continued efforts to prepare undergraduates to teach science and mathematics courses through UTeach programs at Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and UTeach program replication sites started during the Race to the Top grant period at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga and University of Memphis. Student enrollment and retention rates across the four campuses were lower than targeted and, as of spring 2014, the programs produced

Great Teachers and Leaders

approximately 50 of the 100 targeted program completers during the Race to the Top grant period. Based on current interest and endowments, UTeach program campuses also experienced variable success in planning for sustainability.

The State also provided educators with pre-service supports through its Teach Tennessee Commissioner's Fellows program. The State recruited and trained approximately 50 new Fellows to teach in high-need subject areas in summer 2013, and approximately two-thirds of Fellows found placements for SY 2013-2014. Throughout SY 2013-2014, the State provided mentor support and professional development through weekend training sessions to first- and second-year Fellows. While the State met its goal of expanding the Teach Tennessee program, it did not meet its goal of placing 140 Commissioner's Fellows in Tennessee schools. Increased recruitment efforts through billboards and social media expanded the applicant pool for the 2013 cohort; however, recruiting the quantity of targeted high-quality candidates remained a challenge. Given identified gaps in the approximately 50 percent placement rate and lower retention rate of Fellows, the State also used its statewide jobs database to build LEA awareness of the program and to support candidates seeking employment.

LEAs that received competitive grants to expand programs to support veteran and pre-service teachers through residencies continued implementation in SY 2013-2014. For example, Metro Nashville's Teacher Leader Residency provided mentors to approximately 45 current teachers in SY 2013-2014 to further develop their teacher leader skills. Additionally, Hamilton County's TEACH/Here Pre-service Residency program and the Memphis Teacher Residency program supported approximately 25 pre-service educators. There is some evidence that these programs are progressing to meet the State's broader goal of increasing the number of effective teachers. For instance, based on the fall 2013 Teacher Preparation Program Report Card (containing SY 2012-2013 TVAAS data on SY 2011-2012 program completers), Memphis Teacher Residency participants were more effective than beginning teachers prepared by other preparation programs in the State based on student performance on the TCAP and end-of-course exam results.

Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

In SY 2013-2014, the State completed its third full year of implementation of its teacher and principal evaluation system in all LEAs and continued to devote attention to ongoing improvement of the system's structures and supports.

As in previous years, the State continued to gather and analyze data to understand how LEAs are implementing the State's evaluation policy and to target supports to improve fidelity of implementation. With support of TEAM coaches, who are now embedded in CORE offices, the State continued to host regional meetings and provided onsite

services to schools based on requests or identified needs. Educator evaluation data analyzed by the State suggests that in schools where TEAM coaches provided targeted support, there was better alignment between observation and student outcomes data. The State also found that schools continued to maintain alignment between observation and student outcomes data a year after the TEAM coach provided directed support. In addition to one-on-one supports from TEAM coaches, the State provided outreach and resources on developing inter-rater reliability and improving the quality of feedback delivered during the evaluation process. To ensure rigor in the evaluation process, the State maintained the requirement that evaluators be re-certified annually, offering face-to-face sessions for those who did not pass the online exam or were new evaluators.

In addition to continuing to support fidelity of implementation of the educator evaluation process, during Year 4, the State also began to focus on building LEAs' and schools' capacity to use data from teacher and principal evaluations to make other workforce decisions. Through the Tennessee Academy for School Leaders sessions in fall 2013, LEA staff received training on how evaluation data can help them to support teachers in improving instructional practice and identify teachers for leadership opportunities.

In Year 4, the State implemented refinements to the principal evaluation process based on its experience supporting implementation to date and feedback from LEA staff and educators. After adopting the TILS in Year 3, the State engaged a group of 10 LEAs during SY 2013-2014 to pilot a principal evaluation rubric aligned to the new standards. LEAs engaged in the pilot provided feedback on the language and implementation of the rubric and also led regional roadshows in summer 2014 to share their experience with other LEAs prior to statewide implementation of the revised rubric in SY 2014-2015. Using the existing rubric, the State adjusted its online system to improve reporting capabilities and tracking, including prompting educators to complete self-reflection during the first semester.

As part of an effort to increase the number of educators with individual teacher growth scores, during Year 4, the State continued to partner with educators to develop and refine potential measures to support teachers of grades and subjects not traditionally tested through State assessments. A dozen LEAs administered portfolio options developed for arts and world languages teachers in SY 2013-2014 and several additional LEAs piloted portfolios for physical education. In spring 2014, the State also held a summit for LEAs from across the State to increase familiarity with currently approved individual growth measures for teachers in non-tested areas and outline the planning process for districts interested in implementing a portfolio model in the future.

In SY 2013-2014, the State also piloted a few additional measures for potential inclusion in the statewide model. A total of 19 LEAs, including the Achievement School District implemented student surveys as part of the qualitative component of teacher effectiveness

Great Teachers and Leaders

ratings in SY 2013-2014.²¹ Through support from additional funding sources, the State also integrated video technology in several LEAs to hone teacher and principal observation routines, including peer-to-peer coaching and post-conference meetings.

The State's plan also includes developing enhanced data systems to make educator evaluation and licensure information accessible to educators, LEAs, school officials, and educator preparation programs and, over time, to enable connections between data to provide comprehensive information on the life cycle of an educator, including preparation and licensure, hiring and placement, and evaluation data. During Year 4, the State experienced contracting delays and now expects to select a vendor and begin development of these data system tools in Year 5.

In Year 4, Tennessee continued participating in the RSN's Quality Evaluation Rollout Workgroup, made up of Race to the Top grantees fully implementing their teacher evaluation systems. At a July 2014 seminar, Tennessee shared lessons learned and collaborated with Workgroup peer States to discuss rater accuracy as part of continuously improving implementation of evaluation systems, including strategies to determine the effectiveness of observers and deliver high-quality post-observation feedback. Tennessee was also featured in publications describing several States' approaches to measuring growth in student achievement as part of their educator effectiveness systems; as well as monitoring and communicating the results of these measures, for example through websites, fact sheets, and dashboards that track and share evaluation data. Lastly, Tennessee's State-level efforts to continuously improve evaluation implementation were highlighted in a webinar and publication about addressing the tradeoffs of burden and quality to make implementation of educator evaluation systems manageable. These efforts include State policy to reduce the quantity of required evaluations and Metro Nashville Public School's commitment to streamline principal responsibilities and supplement staff available for critical tasks such as conducting observations and providing instructional coaching.²²

Alternative compensation and differentiated pay strategies²³

Building on the action taken in the 2010 through the FTTT Act, in Year 4, Tennessee continued to provide support for strategic compensation through LEA competitive grants and other resources.

In SY 2013-2014, nine LEAs implemented projects through funding from the fourth round of the Competitive Supplemental Fund (CSF), a competition that allowed LEAs with the smallest Race to the Top allocations that received grants earlier in the grant period to propose continuation plans to implement job-embedded professional development or develop strategic compensation plans. In addition to one CSF grantee and 11 LEAs awarded Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grants, 5 LEAs previously awarded IAF grants to design and implement alternative compensation systems that shift away from compensating educators for solely their years of experience and toward rewarding educators effectiveness, including for raising student achievement continued in Year 4. In SY 2013-2014, IAF grantees made payouts based on SY 2012-2013 performance and reconvened stakeholders on their local design teams to review and adjust their models based on the first two years of implementation to support sustainability.

The State also took steps to gather and share lessons learned from the IAF grantees' planning, model development, and initial implementation to inform other LEAs preparing to meet the State's requirement for LEAs to implement some form of differentiated pay for educators according to at least one of the following criteria: performance, additional roles, or hard-to-staff schools/subjects in SY 2014-2015. After a year of collaboration with its State Board of Education, in summer 2013, TDOE revised two policies related to teacher compensation. Tennessee crafted a new State minimum salary schedule to allow LEAs increased flexibility over their salary expenditures and updated a 2007 policy that requires all districts to begin differentiating pay for teachers. During Year 4, the State held four face-to-face training sessions for approximately 30 LEAs that expressed interest and readiness to begin developing personalized plans and additional regional sessions at CORE offices to build awareness and provide technical assistance to additional LEAs. The State also developed and released an online tool to enable LEAs to model compensation structures suited to their local contexts.²⁴

²¹ In SY 2013-2014 for the Achievement School District, student surveys contributed to 15 percent of the qualitative portion of the evaluation and for LEAs implementing student surveys as part of the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund, the results are 5 percent of the 50 percent qualitative rating (the remaining qualitative portion is based on observation results). Three additional LEAs administered student surveys in SY 2013-2014 for informative purposes.

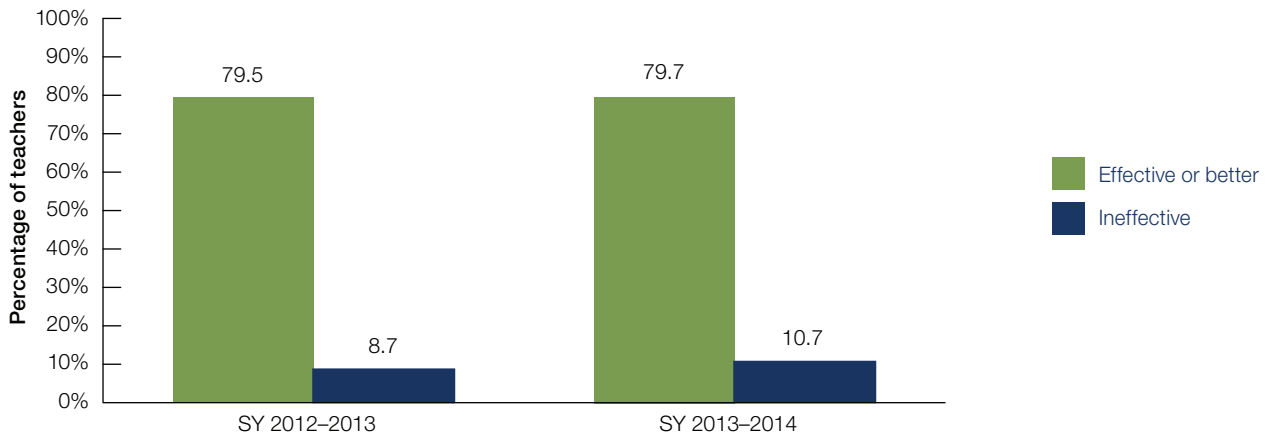
²² These publications, *Measures of Learning: State Approaches for Gauging Student Growth in New Evaluation Systems*, *Educator Evaluation Communications Toolkit*, and *Making High-Quality Teacher Evaluation Manageable* are available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/resources.html#tle>.

²³ More information is available at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/Repository/RE/Alternative%20Salary%20Schedules.pdf>.

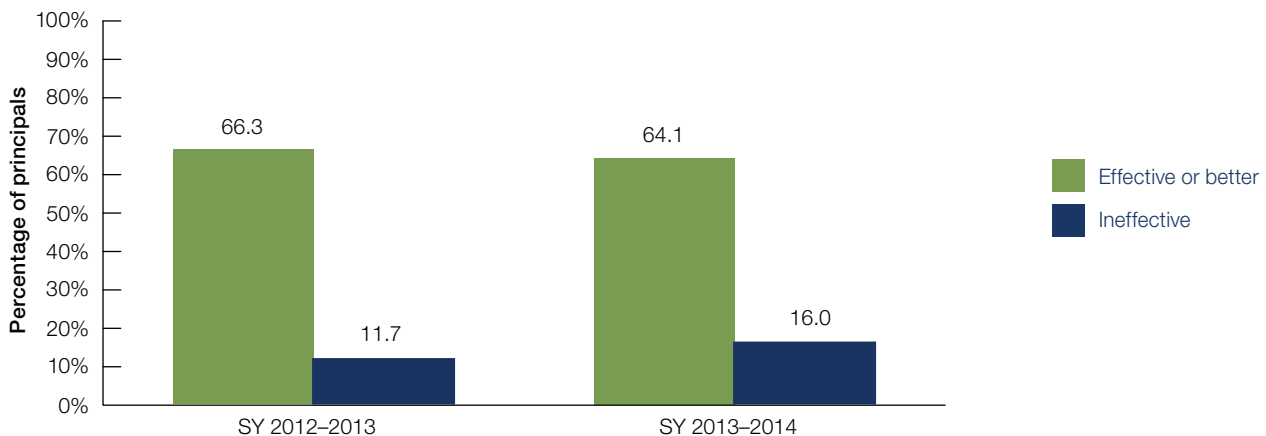
²⁴ More information, including LEA plans and planning resources, are available at <http://www.tennessee.gov/education/districts/pay.shtml>.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Percentage of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better or ineffective in the prior academic year



Percentage of principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better or ineffective in the prior academic year



For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

Ensuring equitable access to effective teachers and principals

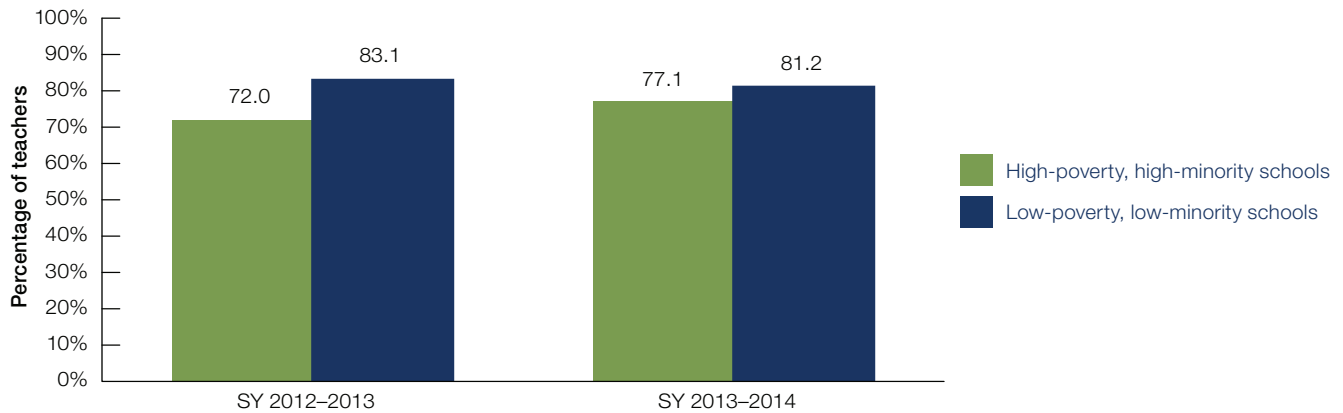
The State continued to make progress in ensuring equitable access to effective teachers and principals through multiple strategies, including ensuring that teachers, principals, and central office staff have data on effectiveness and distribution to make strategic choices. For example, given data from three years of fully implementing TEAM and launching an online jobs database, LEAs now have mechanisms and tools to make informed hiring

and assignment decisions. To further support equitable access to highly-effective teachers, in May 2013 the State announced a recruitment and retention program. The State also placed Reward School Ambassadors recruited from schools identified for high proficiency and growth scores in CORE offices to deliver support as instructional coaches to schools in their regions. Additionally, the State expects the expanded development of alternative compensation models to support its goals related to equitable access (see “Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance,” “Providing effective support to teachers and principals,” and “Supporting low-performing schools” for more detail).

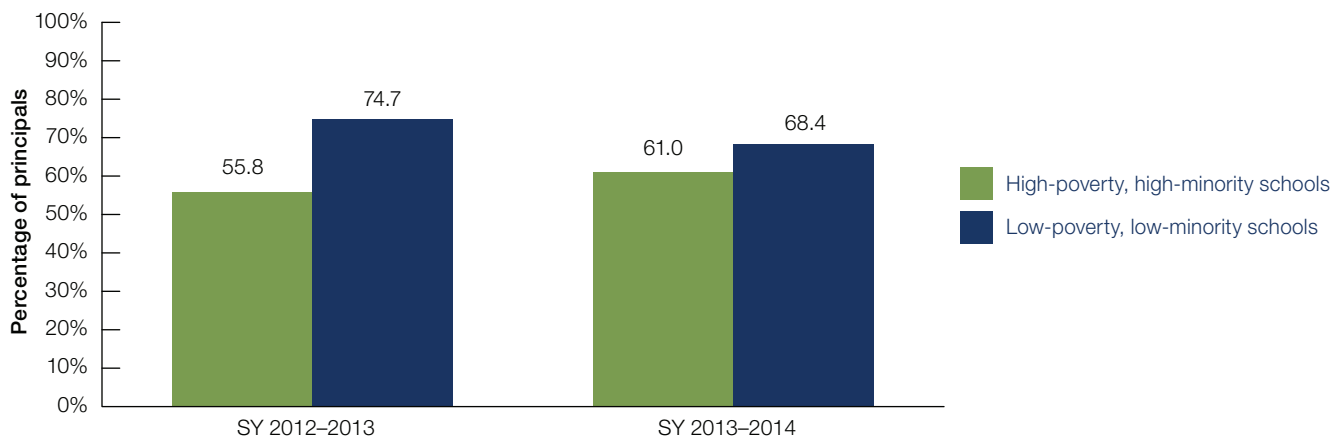
Great Teachers and Leaders

Between SY 2012-2013 and SY 2013-2014, the State increased the percentage of teachers and principals who are effective in high-poverty, high-minority schools.

Percentage of teachers who are effective or better in low-poverty, low-minority and high-poverty, high-minority schools



Percentage of principals who are effective or better in low-poverty, low-minority and high-poverty, high-minority schools



For State-reported context, please refer to the Race to the Top APR at www.rtt-apr.us.

During Year 4 Tennessee worked with the RSN and a group of experts within and beyond the education field to examine educator effectiveness data and design strategic options for Tennessee and other States to consider implementing to ensure their best teachers reach the students who need them the most. A report, Promising Practices

for States in Supporting Teacher Compensation Reform, summarizes key takeaways from this engagement relevant for any States and LEAs working to better align compensation systems with performance, including advice on engaging stakeholders, creating pay models, developing training sessions, and collecting and acting on feedback.²⁵

²⁵ This publication is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/initiatives/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/resources.html>.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs

In fall 2013 the State publicly released teacher preparation program report cards that included TVAAS effectiveness ratings of graduates based on SY 2012–2013 results as well as a trend analysis of IHEs' TVAAS results from the last three years.²⁶ The 2013 teacher preparation report cards also included enhancements such as performance of completers on the most common Praxis content area exams and longitudinal analyses on placement and retention data. Additionally, based on the longitudinal data available, the reports highlighted programs that have consistently produced graduates that outperformed other teachers in the State, those that are on an upward trajectory in growth scores as well as programs with consistent underperformance.

Additionally, in Year 4, the State and the SAS Institute worked with a total of 32 IHEs and alternative certification providers to further examine which components of their programs have the greatest impact on performance as measured by TVAAS results. Overall, the analysis found a positive relationship between preparation program completers' teaching effectiveness as measured by TVAAS and performance on traditional academic progress measures such as grade point average in high school and college, and scores on standardized tests such as the Praxis, Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), and American College Testing (ACT); though correlations between specific academic measures and TVAAS results were weak.²⁷

After facing challenges with data quality and reliability, such as accurately identifying principals and linking them back to their preparation programs, and taking additional steps to ensure alignment between the school leader study and the revised TILS, the State released the first school leader study in July 2014.²⁸ The report provides narrative information on Tennessee's 19 school leader preparation programs, summarizing demographics of program completers and placement rates into Tennessee schools. The report also includes aggregated results (e.g., student achievement levels) comparing students served by principals or vice-principals who completed a school leader preparation program in the State as compared to other principals and vice-principals in the State. Individual reports were also created for institutions to support program-specific continuous improvement.

Tennessee's efforts to gather and utilize data on program graduates to hold programs accountable for supporting and training highly-effective teachers through its teacher preparation program report cards and how the reports have been utilized to support institutions to

²⁶ The Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 49-5-108 statutorily requires a report to measure the effectiveness of programs through retention and placement rates of teacher preparation program graduates, Praxis II pass rates, and teacher effectiveness on the basis of TVAAS.

²⁷ This publication, *Advanced Analytics on Teacher Preparation*, is available at http://www.state.tn.us/thec/Divisions/AcademicAffairs/aa_main.html under the 'First to the Top' tab.

²⁸ *IBID*.

The Tennessee Consortium on Research and Evaluation and Development (TN CRED) study finds positive evidence of Tennessee's strategy to ensure highly-effective teachers are teaching in the schools that need them most

In spring 2013, TDOE announced available State funds to support bonuses for highly-effective teachers (i.e., those that received an overall "Level 5" rating on TEAM). The State made \$5,000 available to highly effective teachers to stay in and \$7,000 for highly-effective teachers to move to schools performing in the lowest five percent of the State, known as Priority schools.

The State's external research partner, TN CRED, studied the uptake and impact of the retention aspect of opportunity and discussed its preliminary findings in a working paper released in June 2014. According to the research, based on the results in 56 of the 82 eligible Priority schools that participated by offering retention incentives, "Level 5" (i.e., highly-effective) teachers who received a retention bonus were 23 percent more likely to continue teaching in a Priority school when compared to teachers with slightly lower effectiveness ratings. The analysis found these impacts to be more pronounced for teachers of tested grades and subjects than for non-tested grades and subjects.

Sources: "Tennessee Department of Education to Grant Signing and Retention Bonuses to Highly Effective Teachers" and "Effective Teacher Retention Bonuses: Evidence from Tennessee."

Available at <https://news.tn.gov/node/10666> and http://www.tnconsortium.org/data/files/gallery/ContentGallery/Effective_Teacher_Retention_Bonuses_Evidence_from_TN.pdf.

improve their programs and share best practices was featured on the Department's *PROGRESS* blog.²⁹

Providing effective support to teachers and principals

Support for teachers

In addition to the expanded School Team Training Series CCSS delivery model, regional CCSS reading courses, and additional support provided by CORE specialists, the State worked with several Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) affiliate stations in the State to develop an online learning series. As of fall 2014, more than 80 approximately 10 minute segments of educational programming related to effective teaching practices in ELA, mathematics, intervention and incorporating literacy into history and the fine arts were posted to TNCore.org (see "Supporting the transition to college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments").³⁰ The State

²⁹ This feature is available at <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/progress/2014/03/tennessee-improves-teacher-preparation-programs-through-report-cards/>.

³⁰ Resources are available at http://tncore.org/training/online_learning_series.aspx.

Great Teachers and Leaders

also released additional materials on TNCore.org based on needs identified by the field, including social studies curriculum resources reinforcing CCSS ELA reading and writing expectations and tools to track mathematics foundational skill mastery.

The Strengthening Instruction in Tennessee Elementary Schools – Focus on Mathematics (SITES M) program extension completed its third year of mathematics professional development, serving a total of 73 K-8 teachers across 10 schools, approximately half as many as in prior years. Also, 32 participating elementary and middle school educators received professional development through weekend workshops and professional learning community meetings led by mathematics professors. An external evaluation analyzing the SITES M program, including analysis of data on changes in teachers' knowledge and practices and student achievement on State assessment results, continued in Year 4.

The State also continued to utilize Race to the Top funds to provide intensive support to approximately 2,000 students in three rural elementary schools. Assessment results from SY 2013-2014 as measured by STAR Reading/Star Early Literacy indicate 76 percent of participating students are exceeding projected progress in reading fluency and comprehension.

Support for principals

In addition to developing a second CCSS Leadership Course and engaging with pilot LEAs on implementation of a revised principal evaluation rubric aligned to the TILS, the State continued and expanded resources and opportunities to support leadership development in the State during Year 4.

Tennessee launched a job portal website at the end of Year 3 to enable LEAs to publicize teacher and school leader positions to a broader audience in an effort to increase the pool of quality applicants for recruiting. In Year 4, the State worked to increase awareness and use of the tool through a recruitment coordinator who supported LEAs with site registration, development of recruitment campaigns, and held job fairs and conferences with IHE faculty. The State also utilized the website to promote the Teach Tennessee program and aid completers in identifying placements. As of August 2014, 152 LEAs and charter schools were registered on the site advertising more than 2,900 job postings that generated 48,000 messages and a total of more than 4,100 submitted applications. The State also continued to provide support to leaders in selecting assistant principals through face-to-face and online training resources.

To support partnerships between LEAs, IHEs, and/or non-profit organizations to develop or replicate programs aimed at increasing leader effectiveness and improving student outcomes, the State awarded eight TN LEAD grants in spring 2013. The programs target teachers who want to be principals, those who seek a teacher-leader role in their school, as well as LEA personnel who hope to serve in a school leadership position. During Year 4, a total of 30 LEAs and 9 IHEs continued implementation of their approaches to building the capacity of pre-service and current education programs, including

university-based programs, a rural collaborative, and a multi-district partnership with top international principals. For example, the Tennessee Turnaround School Leaders Network, a partnership among LEAs, charter management organizations, nonprofit organizations, and an IHE, provided targeted professional development and peer learning opportunities to leaders of low-performing schools to build their capacity as instructional leaders.

In SY 2013-2014, members of the Teacher Leader Council developed and released a guidebook describing models of how its six LEAs implemented innovative models of teacher leadership aligned to the Teacher Leader Model Standards adopted by the Tennessee Board of Education in 2011.³¹ The State also designed and shared resources, and held training sessions to support principals in recruiting and selecting assistant principals based on the State's new leadership standards.

Successes and challenges

In Year 4, Tennessee made progress in several *Great Teachers and Leaders* initiatives, including continuously improving its educator evaluation system and expanding supports available for teachers and principals.

The State continued several teacher and leader pathway programs supported throughout the grant period. The State's UTeach programs had variable success across campuses, with some facing challenges enrolling and retaining aspiring teachers as well as with securing sufficient funding and support to sustain programs in the future. While several campuses may continue their programs, the State is considering other strategies for developing and recruiting highly-effective teachers in STEM fields. The State continued three of the four residency programs funded in Year 1 to increase and retain the number of well-prepared and effective teachers and principals. While one program did not continue in Year 4, the State worked to increase the effectiveness of school leaders through other aspects of its plan, including training provided to leaders in Priority schools, the CCSS Leadership Course, and the TN LEAD grants.

Challenges with recruitment and placement also impacted Tennessee's ability to reach its four-year goal for placing 140 Teach Tennessee Commissioner's Fellows in Tennessee schools. While the program had smaller than targeted cohorts, it was still one of the largest producers of STEM teachers in the State in 2013. TDOE plans to continue to gather data, such as placement information and TVAAS results available through the teacher preparation program report cards to inform continuous improvements to these approaches and develop strategies at the State and local levels to address identified shortages in the teacher and principal pipeline. The State also expects to complete a cumulative analysis of the SITES M program, including student outcomes from SY 2013-2014, in Year 5.

In SY 2013-2014, the State provided ongoing support to LEAs implementing alternative compensation plans through IAF, CSF, and

³¹ "Worth Beyond Measure: Tennessee Teacher Leader Guidebook" is available at http://www.tn.gov/education/teaching/professional_learning.shtml.

Great Teachers and Leaders

TIF as well as technical assistance, engagement opportunities, and tools to additional LEAs considering how to differentiate their pay structures. As of fall 2014, the State reported that of its 140 LEAs, it now has:

- More than 45 LEAs offering individual, school, or district performance incentives;
- Nearly 70 LEAs offering stipends for teaching in hard-to-staff subject areas;
- More than 105 LEAs providing stipends for instructional roles;
- More than 35 LEAs districts that have made structural changes to their salary schedules.

By offering support for LEAs to continuously refine or gradually develop new systems, the State expects the number of LEAs using educator evaluation information to inform compensation systems to increase over time.

The State continued implementation of TEAM in SY 2013-2014, including strategies to support continuous improvement. The State continued to engage with educators to develop and refine measures for teachers of non-tested grades and subjects and to refine the revised principal evaluation rubric. By implementing updates to the principal evaluation process in SY 2013-2014, the State expects LEAs will be better positioned to focus on quality implementation of the revised principal evaluation rubric in SY 2014-2015. The State plans to continue to provide support both to refine implementation of TEAM and build local capacity for using evaluation results to support human capital decisions in Year 5.

After increasing its oversight routines with PBS affiliate station partners developing online learning modules, as of fall 2014 more than 80 of the content modules were accessible to educators. To ensure quality and alignment of resources to CCSS, the State integrated content experts and educator focus groups into the development process. The State plans to gather information on usage and satisfaction with the modules through web traffic, surveys, and other feedback loops in its CCSS training model.

Tennessee released reports on pre-service programs for teachers and school leaders that provide information on their graduates. While the teacher report currently includes TVAAS results to provide information on program graduates' effectiveness, the State is considering how to include multiple measures of data on graduates' performance beyond value-added results, including overall teacher composite results from TEAM and State Board of Education-approved alternative teacher evaluation models. Additionally, after taking additional time to address challenges with identifying leaders and connecting them back to their respective preparation programs, the State released its first school leaders study, including aggregate information on school-wide achievement on TCAP, end of course exams, and ACT, in schools led by Tennessee school leader preparation program graduates as compared to average statewide performance.

The State made progress implementing TN LEAD grants as an opportunity to promote and learn from innovative approaches in leadership development. To provide additional time for several grantees to implement their approaches and for the State to analyze the strategies and impacts, the State received a no-cost extension to continue the competitive grant program in Year 5.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Race to the Top States are supporting LEAs' implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of four school intervention models.³²

Achievement School District

As authorized by FTTT, the Achievement School District is a State-run LEA that provides a structure for turning around the State's

lowest-achieving schools through direct oversight and partnerships with nationally recognized non-profit organizations. After operating six schools in SY 2012-2013, the Achievement School District continued to grow in SY 2013-2014 by including 11 additional school campuses in Memphis.

³² Race to the Top States' plans include supporting their LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

Turnaround model: Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.

Restart model: Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.

School closure: Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.

Transformation model: Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Achievement School District uses data to inform continuous improvement, demonstrates progress

Based on SY 2012-2013 results, the Achievement School District determined that a goal in its second year was to improve reading performance. To accomplish this, Achievement Schools adopted a common approach and literacy program for elementary grades, hired reading specialists, and adjusted schedules to provide more time and targeted reading intervention for students. Based on feedback from school leaders, the Achievement School District also hosted school visits and community dinners to promote collaboration across Achievement School District campuses during SY 2013-2014.

Overall, between SY 2012-2013 and SY 2013-2014, the Achievement School District saw a 3.4 percent increase in students performing at or above proficient in reading. Additionally, in its first two years of operation, the Achievement School District demonstrated progress toward its goal of moving the bottom five percent of schools in the State to the top 25 percent in five years. Based on the last two years of student achievement results, TDOE released new lists of Priority and Focus schools in August 2014. Two Achievement School District schools have moved off the State's Priority list and an additional five Achievement School District schools are no longer identified within the bottom five percent (schools need at least two years' data to formally move off the Priority list). In collaboration with the efforts underway in other Priority schools, including through the Innovation Zone operated by Shelby County to turnaround its lowest-achieving schools, the State estimates that nearly 4,500 fewer students attend Priority schools in Memphis now than in 2012.³³

Sources: "4,500 Fewer Students in Memphis Priority Schools" and "2014 TCAP Results."

Available at http://www.tn.gov/education/data/tcap_2014.shtml.

³³ Beginning in SY 2013-2014, Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools operate as a merged, single school district.

The Achievement School District more than doubled enrollment from SY 2012-2013, serving a total of approximately 4,400 students in pre-kindergarten through high school in 17 campuses in SY 2013-2014. In Year 4, the Achievement School District operated five schools in Memphis and one school in Nashville as achievement schools and 11 schools were managed in partnership with charter operators through a rigorous RFP and school matching process. In SY 2013-2014, the Achievement School District campuses saw mixed progress; while four Achievement School District schools illustrated double-digit gains in reading and mathematics, performance at other schools demonstrated that the State needs to continue support in SY 2014-2015. Overall, the State reported Achievement School District schools outpaced statewide gains with 2.2 percent and 3.4 percent increases in students performing at or above proficient between SY 2012-2013 and SY 2013-2014 in mathematics and

reading, respectively, as compared to under one percent increases in student proficiency for both subjects statewide.

In addition to proficiency and growth results from State assessments, the Achievement School District also continued to utilize formative assessments (*e.g.*, Measures of Academic Progress), attendance and behavior records, as well as classroom observations, focus groups, and surveys to assess progress and quality of its schools. Parent, student, and educator survey results illustrate that the Achievement School District made progress establishing strong school culture in its first two years. The Achievement School District also continued to hold collaborative school practice reviews at the beginning of and mid-way through the school year to collaborate with each school to reflect on data related to student and educator performance and attendance, school culture, parental engagement, and other factors and to strategize about continuous improvement.

In SY 2013-2014, the State also made progress planning for continued expansion of the Achievement School District in SY 2014-2015 and beyond. After authorizing nine additional charter operators in summer 2013 to operate schools in the coming years, the Achievement School District led a community engagement process to match schools and charter operators in fall 2013.³⁴ As it continues to expand the number of charter operators, in Year 4 the Achievement School District formalized onboarding processes to provide training and collaboration for Achievement School District operations, assessment and accountability, communications and outreach, and support services. Further, to organize and streamline the development and communication of district-wide policies, procedures, and practice, the Achievement School District created an Achievement Advisory Council. During SY 2013-2014, the Council held monthly working groups on operations, special education, enrollment, and communications. The Achievement School District also continued partnerships with Teach For America and New Leaders, and recruitment in the State to identify high-quality educators to staff its expanding portfolio of schools.

Supporting low-performing schools

In September 2012, TDOE revised its accountability structure to align with its approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request, which determines performance based on a combination of achievement targets and gap closure targets.³⁵ In this new structure, additional school-level accountability and State

³⁴ The Achievement School District's approach to community engagement was also featured alongside 10 other LEAs and States in a Reform Support Network (RSN) publication, *Strategies for Community Engagement in School Turnaround*. This publication is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/resources.html#st>.

³⁵ On September 23, 2011, the Department offered each interested State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility ("ESEA flexibility") on behalf of itself, its LEAs, and its schools, regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. An extension to Tennessee's request for flexibility from some ESEA provisions was approved on September 8, 2014. For more information on ESEA flexibility, see www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

supports were identified for Tennessee's lowest-achieving schools categorized as Focus and Priority schools.³⁶ Further, the State included a designation to recognize its schools with the highest proficiency scores and rate of growth, categorized as Reward Schools. In Year 4, the State continued implementing competitive grant programs and other supports to build the capacity and highlight the strengths of districts and schools identified as Priority, Focus, and Reward in its new accountability system.

To support approximately 170 Focus schools, the State ran a grant competition in Year 3 and funded 56 schools' individualized plans to address identified gaps in sub-group performance. In Year 4, based on demonstrated progress in gap closure or schools' refined plans to better target identified needs, 54 grants were renewed for SY 2013-2014. Non-grantee Focus schools continued to receive support to address achievement gaps through Tennessee Academic Specialists and CORE office staff who delivered school leader coaching and professional development for educators and organized exemplary school visits. The State also continued to close out and analyze impacts of grants issued to schools earlier in the grant period based on their designations as Focus schools or Renewal schools in the State's prior accountability system to support targeted interventions or whole school reform.³⁷

The State also supported establishing LEA-run Innovation Zones, where LEAs are granted additional flexibility to turn around their lowest-achieving schools, and awarded additional School Improvement Grants (SIG). In SY 2013-2014, the State supported 17 principals leading SIG Priority schools through a Turnaround Principal Cohort. The Cohort supported school leaders through face-to-face professional development sessions to share ideas and problem solve among peers, as well as school visits to observe promising practices. To further support human capital in Priority schools, the State implemented a program to recruit new and retain highly-effective teachers, respectively.

Tennessee's accountability system also recognizes schools in the State that are in the top five percent of overall performance and schools in the top five percent of fastest growth in the State. From schools identified as 2013 Reward Schools, the State recruited and selected Reward School Ambassadors to support other schools in their districts and regions. In SY 2013-2014, 14 Reward School Ambassadors (recruited and trained in SY 2012-2013) worked in their CORE offices to provide direct instructional support to 25 low-performing schools in their region.

The Charter School Growth Fund aims to increase the number of high-quality charter options available to students in Tennessee both within and beyond the Achievement School District. As of spring 2014, the Charter School Growth Fund invested in five Nashville-

based operators (LEAD Public Schools, Rocketship Education, and Knowledge is Power Program Nashville, Nashville Prep, Valor Academies) and two Memphis-based operators (Gestalt Community Schools and Knowledge is Power Program Memphis). Of these seven investments, three of them operated schools in the Achievement School District portfolio in SY 2013-2014. Based on schools in operation and planning stages, the Charter School Growth Fund is exceeding its goal to expand or create six charter management organizations and have those charter management organizations be open or authorized to open 14 schools by SY 2014-2015. The State's Charter School Fund project also includes investments in addition to the Charter School Growth Fund at the Knowledge is Power Program Memphis and the Knowledge is Power Program Nashville. In part due to collaboration with the Achievement School District and the Charter School Growth Fund, the operators opened a total of six new schools by SY 2013-2014 and prepared to open at least two additional schools by SY 2014-2015.

The State also continued its partnership with the Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) to grow its postsecondary awareness programming and to provide grants to expand or create college access programs across the State. Through four grant competitions, including rural college summit grants awarded in September 2013, under Race to the Top the TCASN granted a total of \$1.6 million to LEAs, nonprofit organizations, and IHEs to expand and create college access and success programs, with a particular focus on high-need communities. The State reported that 60,500 students and family members have been supported through the 50 funded projects. In Year 4, the State continued efforts to expand professional development offerings and share best practices across the State for building college-going culture, including development of a series of modules for school counselors, teachers, and other practitioners to support students enrolling in and successfully completing college.

To strategically analyze work underway during the Race to the Top grant period and how progress and lessons learned should inform future work, representatives from Tennessee participated in the RSN's School Turnaround Performance Management Workgroup. The Workgroup's activities in Year 4 focused on supporting States individually and collectively to build capacity to plan for and make decisions to sustain specific reforms for low-performing schools that are informed by effective performance management practices.

Successes and challenges

The State made progress implementing several projects in this area during Year 4, including continued expansion of the Achievement School District and implementation of other efforts to support schools and educators to turn around low-performing schools. The Achievement School District created opportunities to engage and gather feedback from students, educators, parents, and the community to match operators and schools and increase opportunities for collaboration among teachers. Overall, the Achievement School District posted gains in student performance between SY 2012-2013

³⁶ Focus Schools are defined as the 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps, sub-group performance below a 5 percent proficiency threshold, or high schools with graduation rates less than 60 percent; and Priority Schools are defined as schools in the bottom 5 percent of overall performance across tested grades and subjects.

³⁷ At the time of the submission of its Race to the Top application, the State defined Focus schools as those schools in the first and second year of improvement status, and Renewal schools as those in the third and fourth year of improvement status.

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

and SY 2013-2014 in mathematics and reading that exceeded the State's pace of improvement; however, some campuses significantly outperformed others. The Achievement School District plans to continue to assess the quality of implementation across its portfolio as it prepares to expand to 23 campuses serving approximately 6,500 students in SY 2014-2015. Growing to 23 schools in SY 2014-2015 is short of the Achievement School District's planned growth to 35 schools. Based on the total of 15 national and local charter operators approved to date, the State now projects expanding after the Race to the Top grant period to more than 40 schools in SY 2015-2016 and more than 50 schools in SY 2016-2017.

The Charter School Growth Fund is also on track with its goal to expand or create additional charter school options in Tennessee.

The seven active charter management organization investments are expected to operate a total of 16 schools, serving 8,700 students in SY 2014-2015.

The State also continued to offer targeted support to Focus schools based on sub-group performance gaps through site-based consultants and funding to implement outcome-based improvement plans. Reward School Ambassadors also provided additional support to low-performing schools. Surveys of educators reached by Reward School Ambassadors showed positive perceptions of the usefulness of the support. The State is considering how it will utilize lessons learned from the strategies implemented and progress made during Race to the Top to continue to provide supports and recognition to schools identified through its accountability system.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

Race to the Top States are committed to providing a high-quality plan with a rigorous course of study in STEM. In doing so, each State must cooperate with STEM-capable community partners in order to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students. A focus on STEM furthers the goal of preparing more students for an advanced study in sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including among underrepresented groups such as female students.

State's STEM initiatives

During the last four years, the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network established STEM Platform Schools and Regional STEM Innovation Hubs to promote and align STEM policies, practices, and partners across the State. STEM Platform Schools take unique approaches to offering elementary to high school students applied, in-depth STEM curricula through entire new schools or specialized programs available in existing schools. The Regional STEM Innovation Hubs promote STEM communities based on local assets by sharing best practices, leveraging resources, and building relationships among businesses, IHEs, STEM Platform Schools, and other schools and stakeholders in their regions.

More than 4,000 students were enrolled in 10 Platform Schools across the State during SY 2013-2014. Platform Schools established earlier in the grant period graduated their first classes of students. For example, the L&N STEM Academy in Knoxville graduated its first class of 42 students in spring 2014 with a 100 percent graduation rate

and 95 percent enrollment rate into community colleges, four-year postsecondary institutions, or military service. Additionally, a new STEM Platform School opened in West Tennessee. In Year 4, Platform Schools continued to take personalized approaches to integrating STEM into classrooms based on regional STEM resources, including partnering with business professionals to develop and implement problem-based units, and organizing externship opportunities for teachers and principals. SY 2013-2014 results for STEM Platform Schools were mixed, in part due to the varying degrees of STEM implementation across schools. The State plans to further analyze the practices and conditions that contributed to the high student performance at three schools.

Tennessee also met its goal of funding six Regional STEM Innovation Hubs that operated unique programs during SY 2013-2014 in Johnson City, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Cookeville, Nashville, and Memphis, respectively. Regional STEM Hubs continued to partner with IHEs, businesses, and local nonprofits to build capacity for STEM career pathways and high-quality instructional practices in their schools and LEAs.

Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

In January 2014, TN CRED released a report evaluating the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network's implementation of STEM programs across the State from August 2012 to May 2013. To describe the progress of and make preliminary observations about the impact of the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network, TN CRED analyzed the unique approaches implemented by the Regional STEM Innovation Hubs and the STEM Platform Schools' curricula; conducted site visits, including focus group interviews with regional stakeholders and educators; and administered a survey to assess community awareness of STEM. The report identified the extent to which Regional STEM Innovation Hubs made progress building STEM capacity, measured STEM Platform Schools progress against several attributes (*e.g.*, project-based learning with integrated content across STEM subjects; alignment of students' career pathways with postsecondary STEM programs), and identified promising strategies at Regional STEM Innovation Hubs and Platform Schools that may benefit other schools and regions. For example, the report recognized one Platform School's approach to developing a STEM Arc curriculum to deliver a series of STEM coursework within a traditional high school and another Hub's successful approach of connecting STEM professionals to classrooms in its region as promising examples of integrating STEM.³⁸

Regional STEM Innovation Hubs also continued to build local capacity for STEM through training and networking opportunities for STEM Leadership Fellows throughout the State. Beginning in Year 2, the State supported teachers, department chairs, and other educators who were selected locally to serve as STEM Leadership Fellows, to attend summer Leadership Academies and share STEM resources with colleagues in their schools, LEAs, and regions. In summer 2014, the STEM Leadership Academy engaged 142 STEM Fellows representing nearly 70 percent of the LEAs in the State. In Years 2 and 3, the State supported teachers, department chairs, and other educators who were selected locally to serve as STEM Leadership Fellows, to attend summer Leadership Academies and share STEM resources with colleagues in their schools, LEAs, and regions. STEM Fellows provided feedback that ongoing professional development was valuable but to a greater extent if it was delivered face-to-face rather than virtually. Based on this lesson learned, prior to the 2014 STEM Leadership Academy, STEM Leadership Fellows gathered twice for face-to-face sessions during the school years to connect and share resources and innovative practices with peers.

During Year 4 the State launched the Innovative Educator Network (IEN) to learn more about educators' barriers and successes integrating technology to inform and provide strategies for other schools and LEAs. The State competitively recruited and selected approximately 50 teachers and librarians across the State in spring 2014 to develop and implement strategies for personalizing learning, including integrating virtual coursework in their schools and classrooms, and then evaluated and shared those strategies with other educators across the State. The State plans to continue engagement with these educators, including providing summer training and ongoing professional development

and support to IEN participants and to capture successful practices to share with other educators throughout the State during Year 5.

The State also continued to implement STEM professional development grants to provide additional support to teachers of STEM subjects and analyze impacts of these programs during Year 4. During the Race to the Top grant period approximately 750 K-12 educators received training in STEM content areas such as high school chemistry and middle school mathematics through the 29 IHE grant projects funded. TN CRED utilized pre- and post-tests of educators' content knowledge, observations of training workshops and educators' classroom instruction before and after receiving training, as well as interviews and surveys with participants to analyze implementation of individual projects. In June 2014, the final TN CRED analysis found that, overall, programs funded improved science and mathematics educators' practice and attitudes, including the accuracy and appropriateness of content delivered and classroom culture (*e.g.*, active participation of students).³⁹

Successes and challenges

Building on efforts in Year 3 to clarify the mission and performance measures of each Regional STEM Innovation Hub, in Year 4, Hubs continued conversations about their individual sustainability and the statewide STEM strategy. The State reported some STEM Regional Hubs and STEM Platform Schools made progress identifying funding to support sustainability. For example, the Southeast STEM Hub reported that Hamilton County's School Board voted to fund the expansion of the STEM Platform School in Chattanooga.

Based on feedback from STEM Fellows, ongoing professional development delivered virtually was less valuable than face-to-face gatherings; prior to the 2014 STEM Leadership Academy, STEM Leadership Fellows convened twice for face-to-face sessions during the school year to connect and share resources and innovative practices with peers.

The State's initial vision for the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network included building capacity for STEM through virtual learning. The State determined that in order to offer high-quality courses and instructional tools through a virtual platform, it first needed to identify strong examples and develop LEAs' capacity to create the personalized learning environments where students can access virtual coursework in a high-quality manner. The State expects to learn from the development and implementation of innovative practices in IEN Network participants' schools and classrooms through SY 2014-2015.

Throughout the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network's development and expansion, the State-appointed STEM Advisory Council received updates and provided guidance through quarterly meetings. As the State determines its next steps for STEM in the State beyond Race to the Top, it plans to continue to engage educators to refine its vision through the IEN participants and a STEM Leadership Council formed in spring 2014.

³⁸ See <http://www.tnconsortium.org/projects-publications/stem/index.aspx> for more information.

³⁹ Reports are available at http://www.state.tn.us/thec/Divisions/AcademicAffairs/aa_main.html.

Looking Ahead

Most Race to the Top States developed plans to continue their comprehensive reform efforts for an additional year (through the no-cost extension) and are developing plans to sustain many of their projects beyond the grant period.

Tennessee will continue to carry out many of the reforms and projects that it launched through Race to the Top in SY 2014-2015, using both Race to the Top funds and other resources. During Year 5, the State's external research partner, TN CRED, is expected to complete analyses of several key initiatives in the State's plan based on implementation progress, surveys of educators, and student outcomes.

Using this data, project-specific analyses of impacts and lessons learned from implementation, and continued engagement with multiple stakeholder groups, the State will continue to plan for continuous improvement and sustainability of several aspects of its reform plan.

Year 5 presents an opportunity for the State to fully realize its P-12 system enhancement plans. In addition to helping LEAs migrate to new student information systems, it intends to launch educator dashboards and make training available regionally to support their use. As LEAs continue migrations and begin to use tools that make data more accessible, the State and its LEAs will work to continue to improve data quality to ensure data available is timely and accurate to meaningfully support instructional decisions. In SY 2014-2015, Tennessee also plans to expand the amount of data publicly available from its P-20 system, Measure TN, and develop additional data system tools to support the human capital pipeline, including applications to support educator evaluation implementation and licensure.

During SY 2014-2015, the FTTT Oversight Team will continue to support projects in the State's plan with no-cost extensions as well as the 57 LEAs approved to continue their local Scopes of Work using Race to the Top funds through June 30, 2015. The approximately 80 LEAs participating in the Scope of Work Supplemental Fund will also implement approaches to student assignment identified for their potential to have an immediate impact on student outcomes in SY 2014-2015, and several LEAs are expected to continue CCSS and teacher evaluation activities implemented in SY 2013-2014.

As LEAs and educators continue to implement CCSS and TEAM, CORE offices will provide support. The State plans to deliver subject-specific regional offerings, such as the CCSS reading course, and provide embedded content support through TEAM coaches, data analysts, and mathematics coordinators supported through Race to the Top and other funding sources in SY 2014-2015. During Year 5, the State will also complete its first cycle of the School Team

Training Series, a new training model focused on continuing to improve CCSS instructional skills and deepening local capacity to support ongoing implementation. The State also plans to provide additional instructional resources to support CCSS implementation, including curriculum videos to support faculty to prepare pre-service candidates to implement the CCSS. During Year 5, the State will also begin working with the contractor selected in November 2014 to develop new assessments aligned to the Tennessee State standards for implementation in SY 2015-2016.

The State has consistently communicated that TEAM is a work in progress and that continuous improvement based on stakeholder feedback is a key characteristic of the TEAM model. In Year 5, TDOE will bring additional focus to refining the principal evaluation system, including implementing a revised rubric aligned with TILS and developing additional resources to support school leader preparation programs. Building from enhancements to the teacher preparation program report card made during the grant period, during SY 2014-2015 Tennessee will continue working to develop capacity to include teacher evaluation data from the complete TEAM rubric to provide transparency on effectiveness of programs' graduates. The State also plans to continue implementation of several IAF and TN LEAD grants to gather data and lessons learned from grantees to inform future supports for LEAs developing differentiated compensation plans and supporting school leader development.

The Achievement School District expects to grow to 23 schools in SY 2014-2015 with enrollment of nearly 6,500 students in pre-kindergarten to high school. While this is lower than the State's goal of operating 35 low-performing schools by 2015, efforts to continue to scale up will continue through competitive selection of future charter operators. The Achievement School District will also work to continuously refine performance, given variable results across campuses in SY 2013-2014.

During Year 5, the State will also continue development of a statewide STEM strategy. Implementation of several Regional STEM Hubs and Platform Schools will also continue while educators selected to participate in the IEN will provide opportunities to learn from various models of incorporating personalized learning into classrooms and schools.

Budget

For the State's expenditures through June 30, 2014, please see the APR Data Display at <http://www.rtt-apr.us>.

For State budget information, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html>.

For the State's fiscal accountability and oversight report, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance-fiscal-accountability.html>.

Glossary

Alternative routes to certification: Pathways to certification that are authorized under the State's laws or regulations that allow the establishment and operation of teacher and administrator preparation programs in the State, and that have the following characteristics (in addition to standard features such as demonstration of subject-matter mastery, and high-quality instruction in pedagogy and in addressing the needs of all students in the classroom including English learners and students with disabilities): (1) can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education (IHEs) and other providers operating independently IHEs; (2) are selective in accepting candidates; (3) provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support such as effective mentoring and coaching; (4) significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and (5) upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

Amendment requests: In the event that adjustments are needed to a State's approved Race to the Top plan, the grantee must submit an amendment request to the Department for consideration. Such requests may be prompted by an updated assessment of needs in that area, revised cost estimates, lessons learned from prior implementation efforts, or other circumstances. Grantees may propose revisions to goals, activities, timelines, budget, or annual targets, provided that the following conditions are met: the revisions do not result in the grantee's failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this award and the program's statutory and regulatory provisions; the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal; and the Department and the grantee mutually agree in writing to the revisions. The Department has sole discretion to determine whether to approve the revisions or modifications. If approved by the Department, a letter with a description of the amendment and any relevant conditions will be sent notifying the grantee of approval. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/amendments/index.html>.)

America COMPETES Act elements: The twelve indicators specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act are: (1) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system; (2) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information; (3) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs; (4) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; (5) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability; (6) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)); (7) information on students not tested by grade and subject; (8) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students; (9) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; (10) student-level college-readiness test scores;

(11) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and (12) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA): On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the ARRA, historic legislation designed to stimulate the economy, support job creation, and invest in critical sectors, including education. The Department of Education received a \$97.4 billion appropriation.

Annual Performance Report (APR): Report submitted by each grantee with outcomes to date, performance against the measures established in its application, and other relevant data. The Department uses data included in the APRs to provide Congress and the public with detailed information regarding each State's progress on meeting the goals outlined in its application. The annual State APRs are found at www.rtt-apr.us.

College- and career-ready standards: State-developed standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time students graduate from high school.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS): Kindergarten through twelfth grade (K–12) English language arts and mathematics standards developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including governors, chief State school officers, content experts, teachers, school administrators, and parents. (For additional information, please see <http://www.corestandards.org/>).

The **education reform areas** for Race to the Top: (1) Standards and Assessments: Adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and career; (2) Data Systems to Support Instruction: Building data systems that measure student success and support educators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement; (3) Great Teachers and Great Leaders: Recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and principals; and (4) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools: Supporting local educational agencies' (LEAs') implementation of far-reaching reforms to turn around lowest-achieving schools by implementing school intervention models.

Effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance.

Glossary

High-minority school: A school designation defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan. The State should provide, in its Race to the Top application, the definition used.

High-poverty school: Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State.

Highly effective teacher: A teacher whose students achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

Instructional improvement systems (IIS): Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as instructional planning; gathering information (*e.g.*, through formative assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), interim assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

Invitational priorities: Areas of focus that the Department invited States to address in their Race to the Top applications. Applicants did not earn extra points for addressing these focus areas, but many grantees chose to create and fund activities to advance reforms in these areas.

Involved LEAs: LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement those specific portions of the State's plan that necessitate full or nearly-full statewide implementation, such as transitioning to a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements). Involved LEAs do not receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that it must subgrant to LEAs in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA, but States may provide other funding to involved LEAs under the State's Race to the Top grant in a manner that is consistent with the State's application.

No-Cost Extension (Year 5): A no-cost extension provides grantees with additional time to spend their grants (until September 2015) to accomplish the reform goals, deliverables and commitments in its Race to the Top application and approved Scope of Work. Grantees made no-cost extension amendment requests to extend work beyond the final project year, consistent with the Amendment Principles (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/grant-amendment-submission-process-oct-4-2011.pdf>) as well as the additional elements outlined in the Department Review section of the Amendment Requests with No Cost Extension Guidance and Principles document (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/no-cost-extension-submission-process.pdf>).

Participating LEAs: LEAs that choose to work with the State to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plan, as specified in each LEA's agreement with the State. Each participating LEA that receives funding under Title I, Part A will receive a share of the 50 percent of a State's grant award that the State must subgrant to LEAs, based on the LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A allocations in the most recent year at the time of the award, in accordance with section 14006(c) of the ARRA. Any participating LEA that does not receive funding under Title I, Part A (as well as one that does) may receive funding from the State's other 50 percent of the grant award, in accordance with the State's plan.

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC): One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. (For additional information, please see <http://www.parcconline.org/>.)

Persistently lowest-achieving schools: As determined by the State, (1) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (2) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (1) the academic achievement of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (2) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in

Glossary

the “all students” group. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.)

Qualifying evaluation systems: Educator evaluation systems that meet the following criteria: rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that: (1) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (2) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement.

Reform Support Network (RSN): In partnership with the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU), the RSN offers collective and individualized technical assistance and resources to grantees of the Race to the Top education reform initiative. The RSN’s purpose is to support the Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other and build their capacity to sustain these reforms.

The **School Improvement Grants (SIG)** program is authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA. Funds are awarded to States to help them turn around persistently lowest-achieving schools. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.)

School intervention models: A State’s Race to the Top plan describes how it will support its LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models:

- **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
- **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
- **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
- **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools, and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Single sign-on: A user authentication process that permits a user to enter one name and password in order to access multiple applications.

The **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced):** One of two consortia of States awarded grants under the Race to the Top Assessment program to develop next-generation assessment systems that are aligned to common K-12 English language and mathematics standards and that will accurately measure student progress toward college- and career-readiness. (For additional information, please see <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/default.aspx>.)

The **State Scope of Work:** A detailed document for the State’s projects that reflects the grantee’s approved Race to the Top application. The State Scope of Work includes items such as the State’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures. (For additional information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/state-scope-of-work/index.html>.) Additionally, all participating LEAs are required to submit Scope of Work documents, consistent with State requirements, to the State for its review and approval.

Statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS): Data systems that enhance the ability of States to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The SLDS help States, districts, schools, educators, and other stakeholders to make data-informed decisions to improve student learning and outcomes, as well as to facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps. (For additional information, please see http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/about_SLDS.asp.)

Student achievement: For the purposes of this report, student achievement (1) for tested grades and subjects is (a) a student’s score on the State’s assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (b) other measures of student learning, such as those described in number (2) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (2) for non-tested grades and subjects, alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Student growth: The change in student achievement (as defined in the Race to the Top requirements) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

Value-added models (VAMs): A specific type of growth model based on changes in test scores over time. VAMs are complex statistical models that generally attempt to take into account student or school background characteristics in order to isolate the amount of learning attributable to a specific teacher or school. Teachers or schools that produce more than typical or expected growth are said to “add value.”